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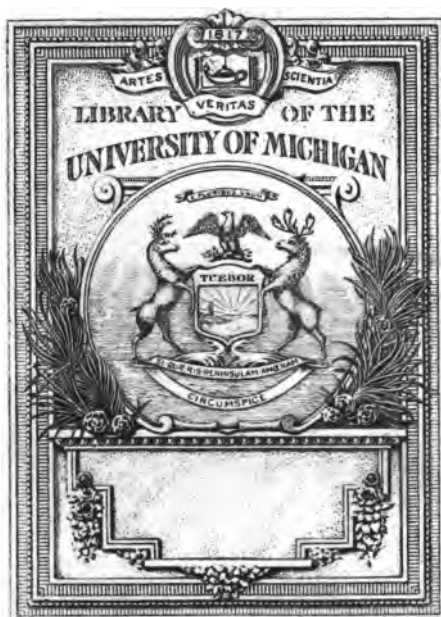
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MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
KINGS OF SPAIN.

—  
SECOND EDITION.  
—

FIVE VOLUMES.

—  
VOL. II.  

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**MEMOIRS**  
**OF THE**  
**KINGS OF SPAIN**

**OF THE**  
**HOUSE OF BOURBON,**  
**FROM THE ACCESSION OF PHILIP V.**  
**TO THE DEATH OF CHARLES III.**

**1700...to...1788.**

**DRAWN FROM ORIGINAL AND UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS.**

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**BY**  
**WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.S.A.**  
**ARCHDEACON OF WILTS, AND RECTOR OF BEMERTON.**

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MEMOIRS  
OF  
SPAIN.

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CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1710.

*The increasing misfortunes and distresses of France compel Louis to renew the Negotiations—Commencement, progress and rupture of the Conférences at Gertruydenberg.*

**DURING** the preceding year, the misfortunes of France continued to accumulate. In the Netherlands, the great theatre of action, the bloody battle of Malplaquet gave new glory to the bravery and firmness of the french troops; but their courage was exerted in vain. They experienced a terrible defeat; Villars, the most able and successful of their generals, was wounded and forced to quit the command; and the allies still further broke the iron frontier which hitherto obstructed their progress, by the reduction of

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Tournay and Mons. From the gradual advance of a victorious enemy, joined to the exhausted state of the nation, the french monarch could not contemplate the fate of another campaign, and the prospect of another defeat, without alarm and anxiety. His embarrassments were aggravated by the conduct of the elector of Bavaria, who, hopeless of the cause of France, made overtures to the allies, and offered to yield Luxemburg, with the other strong places in the Netherlands, which he still held in the name of Philip, in return for an equivalent, or the restoration of his own dominions.\*

For these reasons, the attention of Louis, during this eventful campaign, was incessantly employed to obtain a renewal of the negotiations, as soon as the returning season suspended the operations of war.

Soon after the departure of Philip from the army, expedients were adopted to continue the illusion before practised, and to strengthen the appearance of a disunion between France and Spain. Louis withdrew his troops from Pampe-luna, Fuentarabia, and the other posts on the western side of the Pyrenees; and Bezons, with the whole army under his command, was ordered to take the route of Roussillon. At the same time, however, Philip again received assurances

\* House of Austria, v. 1, p. 1022.—Torci, t. 2, p. 235.

from the dauphin, his father, that the king of France would never abandon him ;\* the troops were suffered to desert to the spanish service in such numbers as to form a body of 5,000 men ; while the walloons were sent back from the Netherlands on the plea of being spanish subjects. Thus the auxiliary forces under the banners of Philip were only ostensibly recalled, to be replaced under another name ; and the remainder of the troops under Bezons joining those of Noailles, a powerful army still hovered on the frontier of Catalonia, ready to return at the first signal.

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To promote his designs with the allies, and to soothe the anxiety of the elector of Bavaria, Louis required of Philip the cession of Luxemburg, Namur, Charleroy, and Neuport, the last remnant of the spanish Netherlands. At the moment of his departure from Spain, Amelot was directed to prepare the way for this demand, and to declare that without such a sacrifice, the king of France, though reluctant, might be compelled to yield to necessity, and join his arms to those of the allies.

This threat producing no effect, the proposal was brought forward in another shape. Louis dispatched Ibbeville, an agent of the elector of Bavaria, to make the demand in the name of his

\* St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 263, 307, 309.

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master, in virtue of the treaty\* concluded in 1703; but in reality with the hope, that the offer of these important fortresses with the rest of the Netherlands, would prove an irresistible temptation to the dutch, or that the cession would at least prevent the defection of the elector.

Philip could not venture to accede to the proposal without the approbation of his spanish ministers. But they, considering only the interests of their own country, regarded the treaty with Bavaria as a mere pretence to purchase safety for France at the expence of Spain, and opposed it on the ground, that Philip would thus deprive himself of the means of obtaining favourable terms of peace. The duke of Medina Celi in particular, warmly remonstrated; urging, that the only way in which France could effectually serve Spain, was not by tampering with the allies, but by a vigorous diversion on the side of Catalonia. Their decided opposition prevailed over the obedient timidity of Philip; and Ibbeville left Spain with convincing proofs at once of his inclination and inability to comply with the proposal.

Still, however, Louis persisted in his design of engaging the allies in a new negotiation. He knew from experience, that the slightest hope of peace contributes to slacken the efforts of war;


\* Vide Chap. 8.

that the former conferences had not only infused new spirit into his partisans in England and Holland, but afforded him considerable advantages in collecting resources for the last campaign. Indeed, from the very rupture of the conferences, a constant correspondence had been maintained by means of the french agents in Holland, and a species of informal negotiation was carried on through the agency of Petkum, resident of the duke of Holstein, for the express purpose of devising some satisfactory expedient for modifying the *fourth* and thirty-seventh articles of the preliminaries, the only apparent obstacles to the conclusion of peace.

During this intercourse, Louis discovered such favourable symptoms in the pacific party, that he endeavoured to lure the dutch into a separate treaty, by offering to cede to them part, or even the whole of the spanish Netherlands, with great commercial advantages.\* But these machinations

\* St. Philippe, whose means of information in regard to spanish affairs cannot be reasonably doubted, asserts that Ibbeville's mission was to obtain the cession of the Netherlands, and the american commerce to the dutch. This is controverted by the editor of the *Memoirs of Noailles*, who, from the papers under his inspection, contends, that the mission of Ibbeville merely related to the demand made in the name of the Elector of Bavaria. We think, however, that he lays too great stress on the written and ostensible instructions of this agent, and that the conduct of Louis gives weight to the assertion of St. Philippe.—*Noailles*, t. 4, p. 106.—*St. Philippe*, t. 2, p. 312.—*Desormeaux*, t. 5, p. 292. *Hare's Letters to a Tory member.*

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were discovered by the allies, and frustrated by the conclusion of the Barrier Treaty between England and Holland, which assured to the republic advantages similar to those offered by France, together with the territorial security to which it was intitled by the grand alliance.

By this celebrated treaty, which was intended to form the bond of union between the two maritime powers against the future aggressions of France, the spanish Netherlands were placed under a provisional government, which was to act in the name of Charles, as king of Spain, though with his express exclusion, till their final transfer to the House of Austria. A barrier was to be granted to the Dutch, consisting of the right of garrison in Furnes, with the fort of Knoque, Ypres, and Menin, the conquered part of the spanish Netherlands; and of Lisle, Tournay, Condé, and Valenciennes, which had been wrested from France. To these were to be added Neuport, Charleroy, and Namur, the towns still possessed by Philip, together with Maubeuge, and as many other places as should be reduced in the progress of the war. The states were likewise to fortify and posséss Lierre, Halle, the citadel of Ghent and Dendermond, as necessary points of communication with their barrier, and to acquire the upper quarter of Guelderland, with right of garrison in Liege,



Huy, and Bonne, to cover the frontier on the side of the Rhine and Meuse. Their limits were also to be extended to a proper distance beyond the works of their own fortresses. To prevent the people of the Netherlands from entering into a commercial competition with the United Provinces, the provisions of the treaty of Munster were revived, for closing the navigation of the Scheld, and restoring the tariff of duties established in those countries. Finally, England engaged to procure for the republic the same commercial privileges in Spain, as were enjoyed by the most favoured nations.\*

Meanwhile the negotiation was indirectly continued with the court of Versailles, and various proposals agitated to accommodate the points in dispute. When the allies required the cession of the spanish fortresses, Louis replied, his troops were already withdrawn, and it was impossible to engage for the surrender of places not in his possession. A subsequent demand of Bayonne and Perpignan, as a temporary deposit, which, without endangering the safety of France, would cut off the means of communication with Spain, was rejected, under the plea that he could not leave the keys of his empire in the hands of his enemies. Finally, the french cabinet produced a new project, which was represented

\* Defence of the Barrier Treaty.—Lamberti, t. 5, p. 464

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as the preliminaries changed only in form, not in substance. It comprised an agreement to acknowledge Charles immediately after the signature of peace, as king of Spain, the Indies, and the whole spanish monarchy; to withhold every species of succour and support from Philip; and, as a security, to confide to the states the possession of four of the French fortresses in Flanders, till the affairs of Spain should be successfully terminated.\* This proposal was however rejected by the allies, as a captious attempt to substitute a vague and eventual engagement, for the clear and positive conditions laid down in the preliminaries.

During these transactions, Louis seems to have received hints from the pacific party in Holland, that a proposal to reserve for Philip some part of the spanish monarchy might be rendered palatable. The struggle of parties in England, and the increasing unpopularity of the war, portended a change in the administration. Attempts to sow jealousy between the different members of the alliance had not been unsuccessful; troubles were rising in the empire, and the war between Russia and Sweden threatened to spread into the austrian dominions. These circumstances, joined with the hope of a favorable

\* Hare's Letters to a Tory member.—Lamberti, t. 5, p. 464.  
—History of Europe for 1710, p. 8.

turn of events, induced the king of France again to recur to a public negotiation.

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He accordingly affected to accept the preliminaries generally, with the reserve of the thirty-seventh article, the execution of which he declared to be impracticable within the specified time, and proposed to enter into the discussion of an equivalent or expedient. These professions induced the states to grant passports for the french plenipotentiaries ; and a grand council of state was immediately held at Versailles, to which the spanish ambassador was admitted, to draw up instructions and settle the requisite arrangements.\*

Feb. 27.

On the 4th of March, the two french plenipotentiaries, marshal d'Uxelles and the abbot Polignac, took their departure, to meet the deputies Vanderdussen and Buys, who were appointed to act for the dutch government in behalf of the allies. To prevent, however, any direct intercourse between the french ministers and the partisans of France, the remote village of Gertruydenberg was ultimately fixed as the place of the conferences.

On the 9th of March, the first meeting took place. But instead of a simple discussion of the obnoxious article, as the allies were assured when they consented to renew the nego-

\* Memoires de Polignac, t. 2, p. 40.—Larrey, t. 9, p. 324.

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tiation, the french plenipotentiaries brought forward a new principle by reverting to a partition of the spanish monarchy. In this, and the subsequent conferences, every effort was made to introduce the condition ; and to reserve to Philip, first Aragon or Navarre, and afterwards at least the two Sicilies with the fortresses on the coast of Tuscany. The allies remained firm to the general principle of their preliminary articles, and refused to admit any further modification of their demand of the whole spanish monarchy than the cession of Sardinia and Sicily.

Still, however, the execution of this or any other condition, or the security to be given for the fulfilment of the treaty, were the essential points at issue, on which turned the question of peace or war. Yet although the french monarch promised to employ his endeavours in persuading Philip to accept the conditions concluded in his name, he invariably declined to become responsible for his consent ; and as invariably avowed his inability and repugnance to extort it by force. He offered to withdraw his succours ; and catching at the phrase in the preliminaries which he had before so vehemently censured, declared his willingness *to enter into a concert of measures with the allies*. He proposed a monthly subsidy, first on the condition of a

mutual reduction of troops ; he afterwards tendered the specific sum of one million of livres without condition ; joining with all his proposals, the temporary cession of certain places in the Netherlands, at his own choice, as a pledge for the performance.

A short discussion however proved, that any species of co-operation, either by subsidies or troops, was utterly impracticable. As the question in other respects still turned on the same principle as at first, the allies were convinced that they must relinquish the objects of all their exertions, or acquire them by a new appeal to the sword. They therefore refused to listen to any proposal of a subsidy or co-operation ; and insisted, according to the most rigorous construction of the preliminaries, that Louis should engage either to persuade or force his grandson to abandon the whole spanish monarchy within the specified term of two months. “ Money, and french troops,” observed the deputies, “ are not to our purpose ; the essential point, and the only security we require, is the execution of the treaty, and the fulfilment of the preliminary articles.”\*

So precise and positive a declaration admitted neither dispute nor delay. Both parties being

\* Torci, t. 2, p. 393.—Desormeaux, t. 5, p. 330.

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equally determined not to recede, the negotiation, after being drawn out to an unusual length by the mode of discussion, and the affected reluctance of the french ministers to relinquish the objects of their mission, was at last terminated by their departure on the 25th of July.

Philip, and still more his spanish ministers, watched with an anxious eye the progress of the negotiation ; and a species of underplot was formed at Madrid, with the evident design of obviating the alarms which the former conferences had excited in Spain, as well as of giving new colour to the appearance of a disunion from France. After an ineffectual attempt to take a share in the conferences, Philip affected violent displeasure at the offers of the french court, which he declared to be equally pusillanimous and unjust, and reprobated the impatient eagerness manifested for peace as an act of impolicy and madness. He even empowered his minister, count Bergueik, to make public overtures to the english and dutch, though well assured that he should expose himself to the mortification of a new repulse.

But all this shew of independence was mere affectation. The commencement of the negotiation was duly communicated at Versailles, as we learn from Torci himself ; and in spite

of his denial it would be absurd to doubt that the same confidence was maintained in its progress.\*

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On the rupture of the conferences, both parties again appealing to the public, mutually endeavoured to throw on each other the blame of obstructing the peace.

We cannot quit the subject of these celebrated negotiations without a few reflections on the conduct and motives of the two contending parties.

The allied powers were convinced that all the offers of Louis to abandon his grandson were illusory. They considered the apparent disunion between France and Spain as a mere collusion; they could not be ignorant of the secret promises given by Louis to support his grandson; they justly regarded the acknowledgment of the prince of Asturias; the nomination of the second son of the duke of Burgundy to the ducal title of Anjou; and the conduct of Philip in general, as decisive proofs of a resolution never to relinquish the spanish throne. On the other hand, the french king resented their suspicions of his good faith as injurious to his honour, and regarded the demand of securities, as a pretext to take advantage of his weakness, and wrest from him his former

\* T. 2, p. 330.

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conquests and usurpations. He charged them with making proposals which they knew would not be accepted ; and declared that they would be satisfied with no concessions which did not lessen the present, and endanger the future, security of his monarchy. Finally, he endeavoured to throw on Eugene and Marlborough the odium of prosecuting the war for their own private advantage.

With respect to the much disputed point, the sincerity of his pacific professions, it is clear that he was as little disposed to relinquish the spanish monarchy as the allies were to recede from their demands. And on this, as well as the preceding negotiations, we adopt the opinion, while we borrow the language of the intelligent biographer of Philip.

“ None of the allies wished for peace, in the hope of extending their conquests, nor had Louis the fourteenth any inclination to obtain it. He, indeed, affected such an inclination to deceive his enemies, and deliver himself from the importunities of his courtiers. He communicated the secret only to the dauphin and Philip, exhorting them never to give credit to any appearance of an approaching peace, and of a design to abandon Spain ; but, on the contrary, to be assured of his resolution to continue the war.”



" Philip," he observes in another place, " did not believe that his grandfather would ever abandon him. The dauphin also exhorted him not to credit the rumours of peace, and to be convinced that the succours of France would never fail. Louis wrote to the same effect, though less clearly. These letters relieved Philip from a part of his fears ; yet the measures of those who were anxious to procure peace, could not fail to give him some inquietude."

On the second negotiation the spanish biographer is still more positive.

" The king of France observing his people anxious for peace, the two factions in England animated against each other, and the Castilians daily becoming more attached to their king, was convinced that a league, combining such discordant interests, could not be of long duration. He, therefore, was resolved to wait for the favourable opportunities which time might present. The dauphin never ceased to confirm him in his opinion, and even the duke of Burgundy refused to approve any treaty unless the italian states were assigned to his brother."\*

It is evident also from the whole correspondence of the french court and their agents in Spain, that a single, precise, and positive com-

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 263—309.

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mand from the king of France, would at once have compelled Philip to relinquish his throne, and dissolved the party to whose zeal and exertions he owed his support. It is equally certain, that at the very moment when he was promising the allies to persuade him, he was already assured of his refusal, and therefore only held out a condition which he was fully prepared to elude.

The vague and general declamations made by his advocates on his sincerity and good faith, would be less absurd, were a single proof of fidelity to his engagements produced, or a single instance of his political tergiversation palliated. Some, indeed, have urged that he was now sincere, because in alarm and distress. But it may be said, the sincerity which depends on fear and necessity, affords only a frail reliance; and Bolingbroke himself, the great advocate of Louis, had abundant reason, as his correspondence testifies, to complain of his equivocation, the instant the strength of the alliance was broken, and his alarms and dangers had subsided.\*

\* On this head, a single passage will be sufficient. "The French press us to conclude, that they may have others at their mercy; and, at the same time, they chicaned with us about the most essential article of our treaty, and endeavour to elude an agreement, made, repeated, and confirmed."—Lord Bolingbroke to Prior. The personal enemies of Louis, as they are called, never advanced a stronger accusation.

Such being the disposition of all parties, the discussion relative to pledges and expedients partook of the same chicanery and suspicion. Louis refused the cession of the places on the spanish frontier, as well as Bayonne, and Perpignan, which were the only effectual expedients for facilitating the transfer of Spain. In tendering also the inadequate and imperfect security of places in the Netherlands, he contrived to render his offers nugatory by the reserves with which they were coupled ; while the allies, on their part, refused to grant an armistice, except they could acquire the same advantages as by the successful prosecution of hostilities.

For the other heads of mutual accusation, after the preceding narrative, we trust we shall not be thought to pass them over too slightly in considering them as mere rhetorical ornaments to grace a manifesto.

In making these remarks, we as little mean to censure Louis the fourteenth as to justify the allies. A king of France cannot be blamed for struggling to prevent the transfer of the spanish crown to the rival House of Austria ; a parent for refusing to dethrone his grandson ; a sovereign for wishing to terminate an unfortunate war with an advantageous peace. But by a parity of reasoning, the allies ought not to be censured for endeavouring to wrest from France

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her numerous usurpations, or for insisting on conditions which long and dear-bought experience had proved to be necessary for their own safety and independence. In political questions of this kind, there is no abstract standard of justice; and, therefore, a frenchman will naturally approve the conduct of Louis, as an englishman ought to approve that of his own country. It is, however, a singular fatality attending this much debated subject, that while dispassionate foreign authors, not excepting even French and Spaniards, admit that Louis never intended to abandon his grandson, and consequently was never sincere in his offers; some of our english writers, with all the evidence of facts before them, have chosen to repeat, and still repeat, the declamations with which the french court and their partisans justified their conduct at the moment, without scarcely deigning even to employ a word of palliation in favour of some of the greatest and ablest men whom England ever produced.\*

\* Those who desire to inform themselves of the real nature of this question, which can never be too deeply studied nor lose its interest till Great Britain shall cease to be an independent nation, may have recourse on one side to Torci's Memoirs, Swift's Conduct of the Allies, and Four Last Years of Queen Anne, the Examiners, Bolingbroke's Letters on History, and Somerville's History of Queen Anne; on the other, Hare's Letters to a Tory Member, the able Vindication of the Barrier Treaty, written by Mr. Poyntz, but attributed to Bishop Hare; Lord Walpole's Answer to Boling-

It is impossible to proceed in our narrative without encountering new proofs of the french monarch's insincerity. While, to amuse the allies, he affected to withhold his succours from Philip ; while he rejected the application of Medina Celi for the invasion of Catalonia, and bitterly complained of the ingratitude of the Spaniards in insulting his agents, forgetting his past support, and oppressing his merchants, he secretly encouraged Philip to persevere ; and held forth the prospect of succours as soon as his own more pressing dangers were past. In reply to the application made at the time of Ibbeville's mission, he observes, " While Douay is besieged, we cannot think of an attack against Girona. It surely will not contribute to the tranquillity of Spain, should France be open to the excursions of her enemies. Perhaps affairs will change before the end of the campaign ; if so, I will employ what troops I can spare in the manner you desire. Profit, however, by the weakness of the archduke, and consider that your fate is in your own hands. The ensuing campaign will decide it. If glorious for you, the enemy will be less difficult with regard to peace. It is needless to inform you how necessary peace

broke, and a very masterly exposition of the whole negotiation, in Tindal's Supplement to Rapin, v. 16. Also the public documents in Lamberti, &c.

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is to me, and the great peril to which I expose my kingdom, when I reject the odious propositions made me to your prejudice.

“I own to you, I had reason to think, that while risking all for you, my subjects would experience, at least in Spain, the effects of the gratitude of which you give me assurances. They are, however, exposed to treatment which I would not have suffered under your predecessor. I have ordered Blecourt to speak to you strongly on this subject. You will gratify me by listening to him with attention, and granting him a decisive answer. It is not enough to say that your ministers act without your orders: I have too good an opinion of you, to receive such an excuse. It would neither be honourable to you, nor conformable to the sentiments of esteem and affection, which I shall always entertain for you.”\*

The circumstances to which this letter alludes, joined to the experience of the preceding year, convinced both courts that the continuance of the spanish administration, as it was then constituted, would only tend to frustrate all their exertions. To effect a change, the court of Madrid employed a stroke of authority, which was at the same time calculated to awe the

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 111.

refractory spirit of the grandees. The duke of Medina Celi was suddenly arrested, committed to the castle of Segovia, and subjected to the private investigation of a special tribunal. His crimes were never made public; but great pains were taken to circulate reports that he had betrayed to the enemy the private negotiation with the dutch, and the assurances given by Louis never to desert Philip. In the course of the campaign, he was removed to Pampeluna. His death, which happened the ensuing year, covered this transaction with a mystery which has never been developed; though it can scarcely be doubted that his real offences were zeal for the independence of his country, and strenuous and unceasing opposition to the projects of France. He was succeeded in his authority by Ronquillo, who obtained this delicate post by engaging to remedy the neglect and misconduct of his predecessor, and to supply the deficiency of the treasury and the wants of the army.\*

This change having restored a temporary tranquillity in the cabinet, Philip repaired to the army, to make a decisive effort for the preservation of his crown. In his absence, the queen was again left regent, with the assistance

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\* St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 330.

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of a council, composed of Veraguas, Bedmar, Frigiliana, and Ronquillo, who was made count of Gramedo. Her correspondence with the king of France displays her characteristic spirit, and her joy at the termination of the *pretended disunion* between the two courts.

Aug. 1.

“Blecourt,” she wrote to Louis, “having communicated the resolution of your majesty to recal your plenipotentiaries, in consequence of the cruel conditions demanded by the allies, I hasten to express my gratitude, and to announce the sincerity with which we are inclined to assist France, to the utmost of our power, in carrying on the war, which the temerity of our enemies renders daily more just and necessary. We have long foreseen the termination of the conferences at Gertruydenberg, from a conviction that the english and dutch would never permit the king, your grandson, to reign in Spain, nor France to remain in a situation which, at some future time, might enable her to wreak her vengeance on her enemies for their tyrannical conduct. We, therefore, observed with great dissatisfaction, your resolution to abandon us, from the hope of leading to more moderate sentiments those enemies who are blinded with success, and who acknowledge no other law but that of force, which they unfortunately have in their power. *Now, therefore, we are enabled*



*to attribute to artifice all the insinuations made to us to pretend a division, which has been so injurious to us both. Let us, I intreat you, by a contrary conduct, strive to regain what we have lost; and as we are bound by one and the same interest, let us endeavour, by measures better conducted than the past, to draw forth all the advantages which may be derived from the union between the two crowns. We shall not be a burthen to you; but, as the necessary means of persuading the Spaniards, that we will, in future, act with the same spirit, we request you to send the duke of Vendome to command our army in Catalonia. The king, who feels how much we need a general, earnestly desires it, and I may venture to assure you, that it will have the happiest effects on the hearts of our subjects, even in favour of France herself. No one can be more duly sensible of your majesty's goodness than I am, and I trust you will likewise be convinced of my affection for you."*\*

Louis, however, deeming the Spaniards not sufficiently humbled to bear the control of a foreign general, or for some other reason, declined complying with this request, although the appointment of Vendome had been notified as early as May, by his plenipotentiaries,

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 118.

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during the conferences of Gertruydenberg.\* Philip, therefore, was obliged to accept as his directors, and seconds in command, the marquis of Villadarias and the prince of Tzerclaes, who were not possessed of talents sufficient to balance the skill of Staremborg.

\* Torci, t. 2, p. 330.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1710.

*Campaign of 1710—Defeats of the bourbon troops at Almenara and Saragossa—Flight of Philip to Madrid—Removal of the Court and Tribunals to Valladolid—Mission of Noailles—Appointment of Vendome to the Command of the Army—Zeal and Efforts of the Castilians—March of the Archduke to Madrid—Imprudence and Disasters of the Allies—The bourbon troops regain the ascendancy—Success of Noailles in Catalonia—Retreat of the Allies from Madrid—Return of Charles to Barcelona—Capture of the british troops under Stanhope at Brihuega—Battle of Villaviciosa—Retreat of Staremborg into Catalonia—Philip marches to Saragossa.*

THE campaign of 1710 forms the most eventful period of the whole contest in Spain.

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Considerable reinforcements having joined the army from France, Philip assumed the command, with the hope of drawing advantage from superior numbers, and breaking into the quarters of the allies. He crossed the Segra at Lerida, with 23,000 men, and attacked Balaguer, to open the way into Catalonia. But Staremborg, too vigilant to be surprised, collected his troops, threw a reinforcement into the place, and took post at Agramonte, from whence his parties harrassed the spaniards in their communications; while the inundations of the Segra completed the distress which they suffered from hardships and famine.

May 15.

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In these circumstances, Philip postponed his attack against Balaguer, and recrossing the Segra, advanced towards the allied camp, either to engage a battle, or, by streightening their supplies, to force them to withdraw from a position in which they thwarted all his operations. With this view, he detached parties to scour the country, and reduced several small places on their flanks.

In such warfare the two armies passed part of June and July. But in the middle of July, a trifling expedition which landed at Cetto in the province of Languedoc, to rouse the protestants in the Cevennes, drew a considerable part of the army under Nouilles from the northern frontier of Catalonia. This diversion enabled the allies to strengthen their army with 4,000 men, and additional reinforcements arriving from Italy. Charles himself repaired to the scene of action to resume the offensive. He reached the camp at the moment when Philip was obliged by want of provisions to quit his position and fall back towards Lerida, from whence he drew his supplies. For the first time, therefore, the two rival princes were opposed to each other in the field, and though mere cyphers, and in subserviency to their respective generals, the events which followed were not unworthy the presence of contending monarchs.

July 27.

The allies broke up their camp on the same

day as the spaniards, followed them across the Segra, endeavoured to cut them off from Lerida, and detached a strong body of cavalry under general Stanhope, to effect a passage over the Noguera at Alferez. To obstruct this passage, Philip sent forward the whole of his cavalry, while he advanced with the infantry to support them. But they arrived late and in disorder to attack the allies, who already occupied an advantageous position on a rising ground above the little town of Almenara. They received the fire of fourteen pieces of artillery in their advance, and before the infantry could arrive, were charged by the whole force of the enemy, who by a more rapid movement had reached the scene of action. The cavalry was instantly broken and driven back on the columns of infantry, and the army would have been totally cut to pieces, had not night favoured their retreat. Philip assisted his generals to rally the fugitives, but all efforts were vain; and he owed his escape to the bravery of a regiment of light horse who sacrificed themselves to secure his safety.\*

This confused engagement, though attended with the loss of only 1,500 men, spread the utmost panic through the army, and led to a

\* History of Europe, 1710, p. 545.—St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 387.  
—Letter from general Stanhope to Mr. Walpole on the battle of Almenara, July 31, 1710. Walpole Papers.—Also in Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 656.

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series of disastrous events. In the first confusion Philip escaped to Lerida, and before he could collect and encourage his scattered forces, the enemy had occupied Balbastro, Carmenia, Huerca, and the places which protected their communications with Catalonia, and were again in motion. They crossed the Cinca at Monzon; in the pass of Peñalba, defeated the spanish rear guard, though sustained by the cavalry, and pushed forward towards the Ebro, to cut off the royal forces from the capital and interior of the kingdom.

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Philip omitted no effort to retrieve his affairs, though at the head of troops discouraged, thinned by desertion, without confidence in their leaders, and indignantly complaining that they were made a voluntary sacrifice to afford a pretext for the abandonment of Spain. He fortunately gained the Ebro at Saragossa before the allies, and transferred the command to the marquis of Bay, who had distinguished himself on the western frontier, and was summoned with a part of his force at this alarming crisis to save the fortunes of his sovereign. The army encamped between the Ebro and the Gallego, and different councils were held to decide on the future operations. Some proposed to abandon Aragon, others to risk a second battle; but such was the hesitation of the monarch, and the discordance

Aug. 18.

of his generals, that although they determined to fight, they made no preparation for action, and not only suffered the allies to cross the Ebro at Pina, but even allowed them to range themselves in order of battle on the right bank unmolested.

A contest being now inevitable, the spaniards disposed their forces for battle. Their left was supported on the Ebro, their centre stretched over some broken ground, which was adapted to favour the manœuvres of infantry, their right extended to the height of Torralva, which overlooks Saragossa. But Philip had still only 19,000 men, discouraged and discontented, to oppose 30,000 flushed with recent victory.

On the ensuing morning at break of day a cannonade was opened; and Philip, after riding along the lines to encourage his troops, took post on an eminence in the midst of his camp, from whence he could survey the field. At mid-day, the engagement began. The spanish cavalry on the right vigorously charging the allies, dispersed the squadrons of Portuguese, and a party even penetrated almost to the convent of the Chartreux, where the archduke waited the result of the combat. But the imprudent ardour of the spaniards giving time to the allied generals to bring forward their reserve, the victorious troops were repulsed in their turn. The spanish left was broken in the first charge and put to flight.

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The allied infantry mounted the ascent on which the centre was posted, with a firm and resolute step; and, pouring in a destructive fire, disordered the lines by a rapid and impetuous attack. Most of the new levies threw down their arms; but some of the veteran troops, with a small body of cavalry, made a resolute stand against the whole force of the victorious army, retired to the neighbouring height of Garba, and did not surrender till they were reduced to a fifth of their number.\*

Within two hours after the commencement of the battle, the spaniards had totally abandoned the field, and the marquis of Bay, with a remnant of 8,000 men, effected his retreat towards the frontier of Soria. Philip, who had remained a spectator till the fate of the day was irrecoverably decided, quitted the field, and hastened by Agreda to Madrid, to prepare for the removal of his court.

On entering the capital, he was not received as a fugitive prince, but as a sovereign who possessed the affections of his subjects, and whose misfortunes and firmness in adversity endeared

\* St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 348.—History of Europe, pp. 591—597. Also a letter from general Carpenter to Mr. Walpole, in which the victories of Almenara and Saragossa are principally attributed to general Stanhope, who, he says, *assisted* the court and marshal into these actions.—Walpole Papers, and Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 638.



him still more to their hearts. He removed, by a royal decree, the residence and tribunals to Valladolid, the antient capital of Castile, and assembling the nobles and principal persons of his court, permitted all who chose to continue in the capital. The nobles recollected the severity used against those who had not followed the court in the retreat of 1706, and a momentary hesitation prevailed in the assembly. But the impulse was given by Montellano, Montalto, Medina Sidonia, and Frigiliana, who announced their resolution to share the distresses and fortunes of their monarch. Their loyal example was followed by persons of every rank.

After two days passed in hasty arrangements, Philip left his capital, amidst a vast concourse of people, who expressed their loyalty by tears and prayers, and cheerfully sacrificed the remnant of their property to relieve his difficulties. His departure was the signal of a general emigration. He was accompanied by the greater part of the nobles; above thirty thousand persons covered the road to Valladolid; even ladies of the first distinction followed on foot; and scarcely any remained in the capital, except those whose age, infirmities, or poverty, did not permit them to remove.\*

Meanwhile, Charles, escorted by his english

\* St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 366. — Ortiz, lib. 22, c. 12, 13, 14.

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and german auxiliaries, entered Saragossa in triumph, and, to conciliate the Aragonese, restored their darling privileges and ancient constitution. Long and vehement debates, however, ensued among his generals relative to the plan of operations. Staremborg contended for the necessity of pursuing the ruined army, and closing the communication with France by the occupation of Navarre: but he was over-ruled by the representations of the British commander, Stanhope. Therefore the allies directed their route to Madrid, expecting to be joined by the Portuguese, and with the hope that the possession of an open capital would ensure the submission of all Spain.

Sept. 28.

With a view either to conciliate or awe the people, Charles made his public entry into Madrid, preceded by an escort of 2,000 horse, and followed by his body guard, officers of the household, and principal adherents. To evince his zeal for the catholic faith, he visited the shrine of our Lady of Atocha, the most venerable in all Spain. But nothing could soften the antipathy of the inhabitants. Not even the pomp of the procession could attract any spectators except a few straggling children. An ominous and mournful solitude, far more impressive than the most public opposition, reigned in the deserted streets and squares; chagrin and disappointment

overwhelmed the pageant monarch : on reaching the gate of Guadalaxara, he refused to continue his mock cavalcade to the palace of the Retiro, as was the usual custom, and made a hasty retreat through the gate of Alcala, exclaiming " Madrid is a desert ! " \*

The expression of Mancera was the universal sentiment. When pressed with menaces to acknowledge Charles, the aged noble, with a spirit which the weight of an hundred years could not suppress, replied, " I have but one God, one faith, and one king, to whom I have sworn allegiance. I am on the brink of the grave, and will not sully my honour for the few moments I have yet to live. "

In these inauspicious circumstances, the archduke was proclaimed king in the capital. The government of the city was dissolved, and the different departments of an ephemeral administration divided among Guerrera, Palmar, Belmonte, Laguna, Uzeda, Hjar, Fernan Nuñez, Don Antonio Vilaroel, and other nobles who had either originally adopted, or now joined the party of Charles. †

It was in the midst of these disasters, if ever, that Louis the fourteenth was sincere in endeavouring to obtain from Philip the cession of his

\* St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 385.

† Ortiz, t. 7, p. 203.

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crown ; from a conviction that the situation of France was become desperate, and Spain could no longer be maintained except by its own strength. But an application from the principal Castilian nobles, immediately after the defeat of Saragossa, imploring his assistance, induced him to dispatch Noailles\* in order to ascertain whether the resources of Spain were sufficient to support the contest ; while he hoped by prosecuting the war another campaign, in Flanders and Germany, for the occurrence of some favourable opportunity to divide or weaken the allies. With a similar view he acceded to the earnest request of Philip, and sent Vendome to command the army.

Sept. 7.

The instructions which he gave to Noailles, will best exhibit his own sentiments and the state of the spanish court.

Noailles was ordered to represent, that the only condition which could be obtained from the allies was the cession of Spain ; and therefore Phillip must induce his loyal subjects to rally round his throne, or relinquish it to obtain a settlement in another quarter. Sicily and Sardinia, which were alluded to, were allowed to be only a moderate compensation ; but it was urged,

\* See an interesting Memoir by Torci, " Concernant la négociation du Duc de Noailles en Espagne, après la Bataille de Saragosse."—Noailles, t. 4, p. 352—373.

that there was still a wide difference between the possession of those two islands with the title of king, and the private condition of a prince driven from his territories, and without the hope of re-ascending the throne.

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It was added, "He who reigns over a small territory may distinguish himself by wisdom and prudence, and in the course of a long life, may hope for favourable circumstances. But a prince reduced to a private station is soon forgotten; his virtues are buried in oblivion; he is useless to the world, a burthen to his country, and entails on his posterity only empty titles and vain pretensions. The question must therefore be reduced to this alternative; can Spain defend herself or not? If she can, let Philip, let the nation rouse all their energies, and shew that they yet possess resources! If not, he must no longer be flattered, but must relinquish a dignity which he cannot maintain, and cease to involve France in real calamities for the sake of chimerical hopes. These truths must be separately represented to the king, to the queen, and to the princess Orsini, at the discretion of the ambassador; the essential point is to dissipate their illusion."

Aware that the whole would ultimately depend on the princess, Noailles was instructed to spare neither promises or threats to extort her co-operation. "Although," it was said, "she alone

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is likely to be affected by the interests of the king and queen, yet she may not perhaps be insensible to her own. The king cannot precisely ascertain the recompense likely to tempt her, but empowers the ambassador to make any reasonable offer. If, however, the assurances of protection, joined with great rewards, are fruitless, threats must be employed. As the last resource, she must be told, that her influence over the king is well known, and should he prove refractory, she will be considered as the cause of his ruin.”\*

Noailles was to impart these instructions to Vendome, who was also on his way to Spain, that both might concur in forwarding the objects of this important mission. They received these orders at Bayonne; and while Vendome was detained by a slight indisposition, Noailles proceeded to meet the king and court at Valladolid.

Philip was roused by the impending danger, and animated by the exhortations of the queen and princess. He resolved never to abandon a crown which he had so dearly purchased. On the following morning, he assembled his nobles, and ordered Noailles to submit to them the commission with which he was charged. The communication excited general alarm; but all concurred in declaring the necessity of imme-

\* Memoires de Noailles, t. 4, p. 137.

diate succour from France, while they announced their resolution to shed their blood, and sacrifice their property in defence of their sovereign and their country. Noailles did not flatter them with idle hopes; he stated that no foreign succour could be effectual, from the distance, and difficulty of collecting and provisioning a large force. He also adverted to the weakness of the enemy: he urged, that their own prompt and vigorous exertions would be more effectual than foreign aid; and represented that, now was the moment for verifying their professions of loyalty and attachment. He gave hopes that to favour their patriotic efforts, the king of France might probably be induced to make a diversion on the side of Roussillon.\*

These exhortations and arguments were not employed in vain. The grandees held a solemn assembly to consult on the means of averting the impending danger. The duke of Medina Sidonia opened the deliberation by proposing to send an address to Louis, deprecating his resolution to abandon Spain to her fate, and calling for immediate aid. Of the whole assembly, the duke of Ossuna alone expressed the opinion, that they could maintain the contest unassisted; and expatiated on the indelible disgrace which would fall on the spaniards, should they apply for

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 146.

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foreign succour, after they had been once deceived by France. But the imminent danger had vanquished all personal and national prejudice. His harangue was heard with indifference, and the proposal of Medina Sidonia unanimously adopted. The count of Frigiliana, who was considered as the readiest and most eloquent writer, drew up an address, which was immediately signed by all present.\* It was dispatched to the duke of Alva, spanish ambassador at Paris, with an injunction to present and inforce it in his official capacity.

The castilian spirit was roused to maintain the national glory and independence. A junta of war was formed for maturing and facilitating the military arrangements, which was to continue permanent in its sittings, and its measures were directed by Noailles, who was requested to assist at the deliberations.

Having fulfilled the public part of his instructions, the next care of Noailles was to impress on the mind of Philip, the necessity of relinquishing the crown, should the enthusiasm of his subjects prove ineffectual. He in vain employed

\* The biographer of Philip has recorded the names of the grandees who signed this address. The dukes of Infantado, Popoli, Atri, Medina Sidonia, Montellano, Arias, Abrantes, Baños, Veraguas, Atrisco, Soria, Jovenazzo and Bejar; the marquises of Priego, Astorga, Aytona, Bedmar, Villafranca, Montealegre, Almonacid, del Carpio, the counts of Lemos, Penaranda, Benavente, San Estevan del Puerto, Oñate, Frigiliana, Baños, and the constable of Castile.—St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 370.



every argument which could be drawn from respect, gratitude, and affection for his grandfather; from the superiority of the enemy, and from the weakness and disorder of the spanish monarchy. Philip, animated by his queen and the princess, and roused by the trying circumstances of the moment, seemed to gather strength from his very difficulties. He controverted or silenced the arguments of the ambassador, and persisted in his resolution rather to be buried under the ruins of his monarchy, than abandon a people, who had given him, and still continued to give, innumerable proofs of loyalty and affection.

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Appreciating the character of his subjects, who like himself needed the stimulus of adversity to rouse their energies, he said, " My troops are indeed weak, dispersed and undisciplined, yet will soon cease to be so. If the army of Aragon has suffered, that of Estremadura is still entire and improving. I have no good general, but the duke of Vendome will soon supply that deficiency. I am glad the english have led the archduke to Madrid: in my capital, he will learn the disposition of my people; he will see that it is a firm will, and not force, which retains them in their duty. The enemy have taken false measures; they have neglected the means of success, and we ought to profit by their errors. What permanent progress can they

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make without strong places, and without magazines, in the midst of a hostile people, above ninety leagues from the source of their supplies? Is it likely, that the archduke will abandon Catalonia and Aragón, to join the portuguese? If he does, the diversion on the side of Roussillon will soon draw him back. At all events, we must endeavour to prevent their junction; avoid a decisive engagement, and prudently reserve our strength. But if forced to a battle, a defeat will be fatal to the archduke, and therefore it is better to risk this last resource than to abandon the kingdom. If we look also to our finances, our affairs are not so desperate. We have anticipated only two months of our revenue, and any deficiency will be amply supplied by the loans and free gifts of the people. In 1706, our situation was more critical; for we had then lost all Valencia, and the frontier places of Catalonia." His spirited queen joined him in these magnanimous representations; and both declared, that if driven from Spain, they would emigrate to America, and re-establish the seat of empire in Peru or México.\*

Philip disdainfully rejected the offer of Sicily and Sardinia, even with the addition of Naples, and treated the proposal as an insidious lure to damp his ardour, and despoil him of the last

\* Torci, t. 3, p. 2.

remnant of his monarchy. No representation could draw from him any promise, however conditional, to relinquish Spain and the Indies; convinced that the spirit and affection of his grandfather would not fail to approve a resolution so dignified and honourable. Noailles returned to Versailles, as the bearer of these representations, and of a letter from Philip, in which he recapitulated, and enforced the arguments he had already employed.\*

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Vendome arrived at this moment to call into action the spirit of the monarch and the zeal of his subjects. On first hearing in his way, that the enemy had taken the route to Madrid, he exclaimed, "If the king, his queen, and the prince of Asturias, are safe, I will answer for the rest!" He found the state of affairs far more favourable than he had expected. Of the defeated army of Aragon, 5,000 horse and 8,000 infantry, besides a part of the wallon guards, had been again recalled to their standards on the frontier of Soria; 6,000 men still remained on the side of the Douro, the same number in Andalusia; the principal army in Estremadura, mustered no less than 20,000 men. Volunteers flocked in from every district; while innumerable detachments, chiefly directed by the able partisans Don Feliciano Bracamonte, and Don

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 145—158.—Torci, t. 3, p. 2.

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Joseph Vallejo, infested every road, and carried on a desultory warfare to the very gates of Madrid.

"Posterity," says the contemporary biographer, "will never cease to admire the affection, fortitude, and fidelity, of the people of Castile. Instead of sinking under the misfortunes of their king, they were animated by his reverses; they lavished their property and lives to repair his losses, maintained troops at their own expence, and made repeated levies to support the cause of their king and country. Accumulated disasters served only to animate their zeal and loyalty, which burst forth with such boundless transports as would not be believed, if we detailed the efforts made by each district and each individual."\*

Vendome was struck with a change so unexpected at the very moment of the deepest reverse, and declared that even a force of 50,000 men would not enable the archduke to maintain his position at Madrid. He bestowed the warmest praise on the firmness and prudence of Philip and the spirit of his queen, which had first called forth, and still continued to excite the national enthusiasm.

As Valladolid was exposed to the incursions of the enemy, the tribunals were removed to Vic-

\* St. Philippe, t. 4, p. 364.

loria. The queen established her residence at Corella, a small town on the frontier of Navarre, remarkable for the beauty of its situation, while Philip repaired to take the nominal command of the army.

Vendome was too prudent to risk the fate of Spain for the sake of a brilliant exploit, but employed the important time in forming and organising the troops, and collecting the means for resuming offensive operations. He wisely left the enemy to wear themselves away in excess and inactivity, and the still more destructive contests with the native peasantry and partisans. He was ably assisted in the details of the military service by the duke of Popoli, the count of Aguilar, las Torres, and Valdecañas; while the zeal and abilities of Don Baltazar Patiño, marquis of Castellar, were equally displayed in collecting supplies and procuring contributions. By their joint efforts, an army of 25,000 men was again formed, and completely appointed, in the face of a victorious enemy, within the short period of fifty days.

All the necessary preparations being matured, Vendome did not suffer the allies to effect a junction with the portuguese, which would probably have enabled them still to maintain themselves in Castile. When their dispositions indicated this design, he pushed forward through

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**Salamanca and Placentia, and took post at the important passage of Almaraz, on the Tagus, where he at once prevented the junction, and was ready to unite with the army of Estremadura.**

The result verified the predictions of the general. To divide the forces and attention of the allies, a powerful diversion was now made on the side of the eastern Pyrenees, where the failure of the expedition against Cette, enabled the french to resume offensive operations. After the allies had retired into quarters on that frontier, troops were collected from Dauphiné, and the eastern parts of France; and Noailles, at the head of 20,000 men, with a powerful train of artillery, advanced into Catalonia, to attack Girona, the key of the province on the north.

This expedition was a decisive blow to the hopes and designs of Charles. His troops had remained in the environs of the capital, exhausted by the heat of the climate, hourly decreasing from disease, and the effects of intemperance, or the incessant attacks of the peasantry and irregulars. The generals had employed the most pressing arguments and representations to call the portuguese troops into activity, and induce them to advance into Spain, that their united forces might overwhelm the discomfited army of Philip, before it could regain spirit and strength. But in vain; for, after a short and fruitless in-

tursion into Estremadura, the portuguese retired into early quarters, leaving Philip to turn his undivided efforts against his most dangerous enemies.

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Surrounded with difficulties, with an enemy increasing in their front, circumscribed to the very ground where they could maintain themselves by force, hopeless of assistance or co-operation from the portuguese, the allied generals were only anxious to extricate themselves in safety from their critical position. In the midst of their hesitation, they were alarmed by the news of the invasion of Catalonia, which was conveyed to Charles from his consort, by means of a deserter. This intelligence left no alternative. To secure the safe return of the archduke, he was escorted by 2,000 horse, while, to cover and conceal his retreat, a royal decree was published announcing the removal of the court to Toledo, and the army took post at Ciempozuelos. Charles had scarcely quitted the vicinity of the capital, before the antipathy of the people broke forth with redoubled force, and his ears were assailed with the sound of bells and acclamations, which proclaimed the triumph of his rival.\* He was accompanied by the few nobles who had figured in the short-lived pageantry of his government, and who dreaded to meet the resentment of an

\* St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 400.

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offended sovereign. The person of the archduke being secured from impending danger, the allies began their retreat towards Aragon, taking the route through the mountains which border the frontier of Castile.

Philip, under the skilful direction of Vendome, now displayed the superiority which he had acquired by firmness, foresight, and activity. On the first movement of the allies, his troops were in motion, and pressed vigorously on their retreat. While his army advanced after the enemy, he proceeded to the capital to receive the congratulations of his faithful people. At Talavera de la Reyna he was met by the deputies of the city, who requested him to return, and presented a contribution which had been suddenly raised, notwithstanding the exactions of the enemy.

Dec. 3.

On the third of December, Philip, accompanied by Vendome, re-entered Madrid, where the public joy was as excessive as the preceding consternation had been universal. After paying his adoration at the chapel of the Virgin, he proceeded towards the palace; but amidst the concourse of exulting crowds, who filled the avenues, and rent the air with acclamations, the royal carriage employed several hours in traversing the principal streets. The houses and fountains were decorated with flags and devices, an



illumination took place at night, and the general joy presaged the continuance of success.\*

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However flattered by these testimonies of popular affection, Philip did not waste the precious moments in useless ceremony. He quitted the capital on the third day, to rejoin the army, which had continued to advance on the enemy, under Valdecañas, while the parties of Bracamonte and Vallejo harrassed and delayed their retreat.

Dec. 6.

Assisted by the zeal, and guided by the information of the people, the spanish columns hourly gained on the allies. Directing their route by Guadalajara, the infantry crossed the Henares over the bridge; while the cavalry, with Vendome at their head, swam the stream in the midst of an inundation.

By this rapid movement, they overtook a body of 6,000 men, under Stanhope, which formed the rear guard. On the night of the 6th, this column had taken up its cantonments in the town of Brihuega, four leagues from Guadalajara, to cover the retreat of the baggage through the neighbouring defiles. The post was instantly invested by a strong detachment of cavalry under Valdecañas; the whole army gradually arrived; and the parties of Bracamonte and Vallejo, advancing beyond Brihuega,

Dec. 7, 8.

\* St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 408.

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watched the motions of the main body under Staremburg.

The british general, though surprised in a post with no other defence than an antient wall, without provisions, and before he even suspected the near approach of an enemy, did not dishonour his country, nor discredit his past exploits. He barricaded the gates, formed entrenchments in the streets; and pierced the walls of the houses, to maintain his post till he could receive assistance. Nothing however could arrest the impetuosity of the spaniards, who were animated by the presence of their beloved monarch. The field artillery being too light to effect a breach, a mine was sprung under one of the gates, and blew up a considerable fragment of the wall. The troops bursting into the town, forced their way through every obstacle, amidst a fire of musketry, which from its continued fierceness, was compared to a conflagration. Before the close of evening, the british commander, whose force had been reduced to 4,500 men by the preceding carnage, was compelled to throw himself on the mercy of his assailants.

The prisoners were instantly marched away, and preparations made to receive the army of Staremburg, which was descried by the spanish parties advancing to the assistance of his col-

league. The royal troops were hastily formed on a gentle eminence, which rises in the plain of Villaviciosa.


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On the first intelligence of the attack, the austrian commander had collected his troops with all the speed that the scattered nature of their march would permit ; but, from local obstacles, and the necessity of preserving order in the presence of an active and skilful adversary, he did not arrive within six miles of Brihuega, till after the surrender of Stanhope. He made signals to announce his approach ; and, though he feared, from the cessation of the firing, that the event was already decided, he continued to advance. Observing, at length, the whole spanish army drawn up to receive him, and deeming it more numerous than it really was, he occupied a position behind ravines and cottages, and opened a cannonade with the hope of amusing the enemy, till night should favour his retreat.

Vendome, anxious to crown his splendid enterprises with the total ruin of the enemy, no sooner perceived the suspension of their march, than he gave the signal for battle. Some of the courtiers advising Philip not to expose his sacred person, Vendome, with the true spirit of a soldier, exclaimed, “ With you at their head

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Sire, so many brave men will be irresistible.”\* The advice was congenial to the character of the young monarch himself. He headed the right wing, charged the enemy, dispersed the first line of their cavalry, and forced the second to retreat ; but his troops, carried away by their ardour, neglected to turn on the flank of the infantry, now left exposed. The battle, however, spread along the lines, and the allies, who had no alternative but victory or ruin, charged with such impetuosity, that the royal army seemed irrecoverably broken, and a retreat was ordered to Torrija.

In this extremity, the spanish generals and officers collected the remnants of their regiments ; forming a small, but compact body, they fought like common soldiers in the ranks, and arrested the progress of the hostile attack, till Valdecañas could advance at the head of the walloons and reserve. He fell on the enemy, exhausted and disordered by their preceding efforts, and retrieved the fortune of the day. At length darkness put an end to a combat, which, if prolonged, might have terminated in favour of the allies. Staremborg, left master of the field, spiked his own artillery, and that of the spaniards, and retreated during the night. After losing

\* Barre Histoire d'Allemagne, t. 10, p. 575.

3,000 men by the attacks of the spanish partisans, he reached Barcelona with only 7,000, the discomfited remnant of that army which had given law to Spain. The bourbon troops purchased their advantage with the loss of 3,000 killed and 1,000 wounded.

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Both friends and enemies concurred in applauding the respective commanders. Vendome received the well earned title of the Restorer of the spanish monarchy; Staremborg the praises even of his antagonists for bravery, coolness, and skill, seldom paralleled. Among the spanish officers, who distinguished themselves, we find the names of Aguilar, San Estevan de Gormaz, Moya, Bracamonte, and particularly Valdecañas; and on the other side, Vilaroel, who headed the centre, and led the charge which had nearly proved fatal to the arms of his former sovereign.\*

Philip sent an account of this memorable engagement, to Louis the fourteenth, which does honour to his candour and magnanimity.

“ Our two lines were put in motion, and at half past three the cavalry on the right began the onset. After dispersing that of the enemy on the left, it fell on some battalions of infantry, pierced their ranks, and took possession of a

\* St. Philippe, 421—437. —History of Europe, for 1710. — Ortiz.

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battery. Our infantry immediately charged, and after reiterated attacks, gained the rear of the enemy, and joined the cavalry on the right. But the enemy's infantry fought gallantly, and slowly pushed back our troops, except the wallon guards, who cut a way through their two lines and the reserve, driving every thing before them from the field with great carnage.

“ The duke of Vendome, observing that our centre gave way, and that our cavalry on the left had not dispersed their's on the right, gave orders to fall back towards Torrija ; but when we were retiring with great part of the troops, we were informed that the marquis of Valdecañas and general Mahony with the reserve of fifteen squadrons, had attacked and defeated the enemy's infantry. In consequence of this joyful intelligence, we returned to the heights of Brihuega, and waited the approach of day to resume our position on the field of battle.”\*

Both parties, as is usual in doubtful conflicts, claimed the honours of the day. The truth, as appears from the letter of Philip, and the events of the engagement, was, that Staremburg really gained the victory ; yet, as his only object was retreat, and as in the obscurity and confusion, he could not discover the situation of his an-

\* Memoires de Berwick, t. 2, p. 515.

tagonists, he voluntarily relinquished the field of battle, and retired under all the disadvantages of a defeat.

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After the enemy had fallen back into Catalonia, Philip directed his march to Saragossa, whither the queen and court had removed. Notwithstanding the advance of the season, the military operations were actively continued by Valdecañas and Mahony. While the french reduced Girona and descended into the plain of Urgel, the spaniards gradually established themselves in the centre of Catalonia; and the capture of the smaller posts of Miravet, Calal, and Salsona, straitened the quarters of the archduke to one third of the province, and menaced the two maritime fortresses, Barcelona and Tarragona.

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A general hope prevailed that the contests of Spain were speedily drawing to a close; and Vendome, with his characteristic activity, pressed for the immediate attack of Barcelona. A variety of circumstances, however, suspended the operations: the troops were distributed into quarters; and the delay till the returning season of action enabled the archduke to recruit his strength, and maintain his expiring cause.

Meanwhile the councils and offices were again removed to Madrid. Ronquillo renewed his former severity against all who even from fear

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had acknowledged the archduke, and banished the wives and families of those who accompanied his retreat. Many of the higher orders appear to have suffered for their timidity or imprudence on this occasion ; but among the middling and lower classes, even his vigilance and austerity could not find a single object for punishment.\*

\* In addition to the authorities before cited, we consulted for the contents of this chapter in general, Ortiz, Tindal, Targe, and the other historians to whom we have already referred.



CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1711.

*Disastrous state of France—Defection of England from the Grand Alliance—Secret negotiations between the british ministry and France—Situation of Spain—Declining health of the queen—Internal feuds, and temporary misunderstanding between the courts of Versailles and Madrid—Memorial of Noailles on the situation of the court and country—His cabals against the queen and princess Orsini—His recal, and the disgrace of Aguilar—Mission and instructions of the new envoy Bonnac.—Opposition of Philip and his ministers to the sacrifices required by Louis as the price of peace—Successful interference of the princess—Philip grants full powers to Louis, to continue the negotiation in his behalf—Death of the emperor Joseph—Departure of Charles from Catalonia—His election to the imperial throne—Breach between the courts of London and Vienna—Opening of the congress of Utrecht—Advantages gained by Louis—Disgrace of Marlborough—Campaign of 1711 in Catalonia.*

**N**OTWITHSTANDING this favourable change of affairs, the crown of Philip still tottered on his head ; for the fate of Spain, as well as the issue of the war, ultimately depended on the contest in the Netherlands.

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In the preceding year, Douay, Bethune, St. Venant, and Aire, had been added to the conquests of the allies ; the iron frontier of France was broken ; and another campaign prosecuted with the same skill, and attended with the same success, would have reduced Louis to receive

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the terms of peace, dictated before the gates of his capital. Public distress increased with the public disasters, and all the energy of an absolute government scarcely sufficed to draw from an exhausted nation the means of prolonging a defensive and unfortunate contest. The death of the dauphin removed the principal adviser of the war in Spain; while the party of the new dauphin found in every quarter of the court and country, zealous advocates for that restoration of peace, which they considered as the only resource for averting impending ruin.

With regard to the allies, the preceding year had closed with the most flattering aspect. All attempts of France to introduce divisions in the confederacy, and negotiate a separate peace, were ineffectual; while, on the side of the emperor, the defeat of the rebels in Hungary, and the commencement of a negotiation with the Turks, for the termination of a contest which had hitherto weakened his efforts, enabled him to send considerable reinforcements to Spain, the Netherlands, and the Rhine. The time now seemed to be arrived, when retaliation was to be made on France, for the manifold evils she had inflicted on Europe, since the commencement of the thirty years' war; when she was to be stripped of those acquisitions which she owed to force, intrigue, and usurpation, and a barrier

established for the further security of the states of Europe against her power, injustice, and ambition: At this crisis, the House of Bourbon was again saved by those jealousies among its enemies, which had more contributed to its grandeur than even its own power and resources.


The duke of Savoy, dissatisfied with the emperor for withholding those territories which had been promised as the price of his services to the common cause, opened a secret negotiation with France, which, though discovered and frustrated, did not fail to leave behind the seeds of suspicion and discord.\*

But the chief cause which rendered vain all the sacrifices and exertions of the war, which prevented the deliverance of Europe from the scourge of french oppression, was the defection of England from those principles which the british government had been the first to lay down and assert.

This change originated principally in the character and views of queen Anne. Unlike William, she entertained neither personal nor political animosity against France; and she was alike incapable of comprehending the principles, or imbibing the spirit of his system of policy. She had accepted the throne as her right; but the death of her only son, the duke of Gloucester,

\* *Mémoires de Berwick*, t. 2, p. 182.

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awakening in her bosom the affections of a sister, she became anxious to restore her dethroned family in the person of her brother. Hitherto, the unexampled success which had crowned her arms, induced her to repress her private sentiments; and she had been borne away by the ardour of an exulting people, and the authority of her great and fortunate ministers, whom she respected, without regarding or approving.

At length, accident rather than design, called these latent inclinations into action. Her favourite, the duchess of Marlborough, had placed near her royal person a dependent relation, Mrs. Masham, with the intention of relieving herself from the tedium of constant attendance, and, at the same time, of strengthening her interest. This lady, secretly attached also to the exiled family, and jealous of her patroness, profited by the moments of ill humour, which the overbearing temper of the duchess frequently excited in the breast of the queen. To hasten the downfall of the duchess, she fomented the dissatisfaction of her royal mistress, and became the agent of a private negotiation with Harley, the chief of the tories. As the queen could not fulfil her designs in favour of her brother, during a war which humbled France, and strengthened the power of the whig ministry, her views were directed to the attainment of peace. In this object, her tory

and jacobite advisers equally concurred; because, from party motives, they all had joined in reprobating the conduct of the war, and exciting the popular clamour for its termination.

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Those domestic feuds, which are inseparable from a free government, aided the views of the queen, and accelerated the downfall of the whigs. All the powers of the press, assisted by the talents of the ablest writers, had been effectually employed to misrepresent their conduct, and vilify their characters. Success had gradually lost its power to dazzle. The danger which had awakened the public alarm, was scarcely removed before it was considered as imaginary; and the people began to clamour for the termination of a contest, which they were taught to believe was prolonged merely to gratify personal avarice and private ambition. Of this revolution in the public sentiment, the tories profited with consummate address; they formed an union with the jacobites, and opened secret negotiations with France, and with the exiled family.\*

The project being thus far matured, the first blow was struck by the disgrace of the duchess of Marlborough, whose place was filled by Mrs. Masham. The whigs, unaware of their danger, or despising the intrigues of so inconsiderable an

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\* Memoires de Berwick, t. 2.—Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2, passim.

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agent as a bed-chamber woman, hastened the crisis by their overweening confidence. Instead of catching the alarm on the removal of lord Sunderland, the son in law of Marlborough, from the office of secretary of state; instead of disconcerting their opponents by decision and unanimity, they temporised, and suffered the strength of their party to be gradually undermined by the successive dismissal of their chiefs. In August, the disgrace of Godolphin, the great minister of finance, announced their approaching downfall; and was followed by the tardy resignation of others. Finally, before the close of the year, an administration of tories was formed under the direction of Harley, and the stability of the party secured by the election of a new parliament, in which the influence of government; their own personal exertions, and the co-operation of the jacobites, gave them an entire ascendancy.

In the midst of their success, they could not yet venture openly to attack the well-founded authority of Marlborough. They, therefore, suffered him to retain the command of the army, till, by working on the passions of the people, and abridging the means of success, they had prepared the way for his disgrace. The change of measures created a new burst of popularity in their favour, and the services of Harley were soon afterwards rewarded with the earldoms of Oxford and Mor-

timer, and the high office of lord treasurer. The post of principal secretary of state, with the chief direction of foreign affairs,\* was intrusted to his colleague, Henry St. John, better known by the title of Bolingbroke, who, to an inveterate antipathy to the very name of Austria, united a blind partiality to France.

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This political revolution occasioned an unfeigned triumph at Paris and Madrid. The fall of the whigs was proclaimed as the salvation of the two monarchies, and Torci justly remarked, "what we have lost in the Netherlands, we shall now gain in London."†

The new ministers, secure of the parliament, hastened to dissolve the grand alliance, and hurried into a negotiation with France. They, indeed, scarcely waited till they were perfectly established in power, before they listened to overtures, which were conveyed through the channel of marshal Tallard, then a prisoner in England. After his return to France, the communication was kept up by a catholic priest of the name of Gualtier, originally a french spy, and now brought into notice by the earl of Jersey, a zealous adherent of the Stuarts, to whose lady he was chaplain.

\* As lord Dartmouth, the Secretary for the Southern Department, was unacquainted with french, the transactions with France, which belonged to his department, were transferred to Bolingbroke.

† Torci, t. 3, p. 16 et seq.

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These communications were graciously received by Louis; and as early as April 1711, Gualtier was sent to Paris, charged with directions from the new ministers. They represented, in humble terms, that peace was no less expedient for England than for France. They hinted at the necessity of preserving appearances with the allies, and requested the king to propose a renewal of the conferences to the dutch. With a servility ill becoming the ministers of a nation so recently the arbitress of Europe, they declared that such orders should be given to the english plenipotentiaries as should prevent Holland from again obstructing the conclusion of peace, by the renewal of those haughty demands which had insulted the honour, and wounded the feelings of the french monarch. No specific engagement was demanded, but merely a general acknowledgment that their overtures were favourably received.\*

Louis, indeed, cordially received these overtures, as the prelude to a far more honourable accommodation than his misfortunes had permitted him to expect since the battle of Blenheim. Under the pretext of consulting his own dignity, though, in reality, to make an invidious distinction between the two maritime powers, he declined opening any direct negotiation with the

\* Torci, t. 3, p. 31—36.



States, and announced his desire to employ the mediation of England. He expressed these sentiments in a memorial, containing the conditions which he proposed to concede, as the basis of a general accommodation. He offered security to the english for their commerce in Spain, the Indies and the Mediterranean, a barrier in the Netherlands, and the restoration of the commercial advantages formerly enjoyed by Holland. He declared his resolution to give reasonable satisfaction to all the other members of the grand alliance ; and as the favourable situation of Philip afforded new expedients to settle the dispute relative to Spain, he stated that means should be taken to obviate the difficulties, and to secure the present situation, commerce, and interests of the belligerent powers. Finally, conferences were to be immediately opened for the conclusion of a general peace, and Aix la Chapelle or Liege proposed as the place of meeting.\*

The british ministry accepted these vague conditions, and meanly approved the mark of contempt shewn towards Holland, as just and delicate. They did not, however, wait for the opening of general conferences ; but selfishly grasping at the offer of commercial advantages, required such explanations as led to a private and separate negotiation. By the agency of

\* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. 1, p. 172.

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Gualtier, they continued these clandestine transactions with the utmost activity; while they amused the States with professions of cordiality and confidence. They at length so far matured their arrangements, that Prior, the confidential friend of Oxford and Bolingbroke, was dispatched to Paris in July, to put the last hand to an engagement which was to decide the fate of Europe.

During the progress of a negotiation so fortunate for the House of Bourbon, the cabinet of Spain appeared as if inclined to separate from France; and evinced more spirit and independence than had been displayed, since the recal of the princess Orsini.

In the midst of the recent success, the joy of Philip had been damped by the declining health of the queen. That dreadful malady,\* which finally hurried her to an early grave, already preyed on her constitution, worn down with incessant cares and exertions. But though her personal charms began to fade, and her native vivacity to diminish, her spirit continued unbroken, and she maintained her usual ascendancy over the mind and affections of her doting husband. Philip, on the contrary, was deeply affected by the sufferings of one so tenderly beloved: brooding over the prospect of his approaching loss, he shrunk from the bustle of a

\* The King's-evil.

military life, and the necessary occupations of government. CHAP. 19.

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At the same time, the removal of external danger gave new force to internal discontents. The national jealousy of foreigners revived: the nobles renewed their complaints, that repeated proofs of zeal and loyalty had only led to the diminution of the royal favour, and the retrenchment of their just rights. The lofty spirit of Vendome, too independent to bend even to the controul of Louis, irritated the native generals, Aguilar and Valdecañas, who, proud of their recent services, were solicitous to appropriate the management of military affairs, and bitterly censured the operations of their chief. Disputes also arose as before among the french themselves, and amidst the warmest professions of friendship and confidence, great jealousy existed between Vendome and Noailles.

As these contentions gave birth to mutual aversion among those, who had recently acted in unison; and as the pending negotiations for peace rendered it necessary to acquire a more perfect controul over the court of Madrid, the french monarch delegated Noailles to Saragossa, to perform the functions, without the title of an ambassador. Nor indeed did it appear possible to make a more appropriate choice. Habituated to courts from his infancy, he was supple, insi-

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nuating, sagacious, and discreet. He possessed the full confidence of Louis himself; he was protected by the duchess of Burgundy, sister to the queen of Philip, favoured by his relative madame de Maintenon, and was the intimate friend of the princess Orsini from her first career in Spain. He had recently been honoured with the title of a grandee, and the order of the golden fleece, accompanied with a flattering letter from the queen, in which she expressed her own and her husband's gratitude for his valuable services. Finally, his early attendance on Philip, and his past experience, had made him intimately acquainted with the disposition of the court and the character of the spanish nation.

The picture drawn by Noailles for the information of his sovereign, is almost a counterpart of that sketched by Tessé, notwithstanding the changes produced by past revolutions. It contains also hints, by no means equivocal, relative to the misunderstandings between the two courts, which had extorted from Torci the complaint, that the secrets of Spain no longer found their way to France.

May 19.

"I must," he observed, "strongly recommend the appointment of an ambassador, who is likely to be both feared and respected, and who will take upon himself only the affairs of France. Provided I am not charged with the commission

I shall be satisfied, for since I see its difficulties, I consider it as one of the least desirable. In regard to France, I can discover only embarrassments and opposition: what may be the consequence when the spaniards no longer need our succours, I know not! Pretences will not then be wanting to efface the remembrance of past benefits. It will be said, Louis the fourteenth has consulted only his own interest in supporting his grandson on the throne. They will censure the convention of Italy, concluded without the co-operation of Philip; the intention of abandoning Spain when France hoped to do it with advantage: the little share which she has been permitted to take in the conferences for peace; the conduct of our countrymen on many occasions, and the seizure of the american treasures.

“ The king and queen and those who surround them are always the same: petty and private reasons overpower the consideration of the general good. Instead of returning to Madrid, the court, without any reasonable motive, chuses to reside at Corella. Since the battle of Villaviciosa a general lethargy prevails; application indeed is not wanting, but it is useless, because without order or rule. Those who restored affairs after the battle of Saragossa, are become suspected, and removed as much as possible. Court intrigues predominate, and no confidence is given except

CHAP. 19. to five or six wretches, without experience or  
1711. talents.

“ It is necessary to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the death of the emperor. Peace must be made, and will be made, if Philip is still supported. Provided he keeps Spain and the Indies, he ought to deem himself fortunate, whatever commercial advantages he may grant to the enemy. It is a fine *appanage* for a younger brother. France united with Spain, without being able to give the law, has no other resource, than to persuade Europe, that the union is neither prejudicial nor dangerous. It is for *the interest of France itself*, no less than *for that of the allies, that Spain should lose something* ; since we cannot confide in the disposition of the court of Madrid any longer than it has occasion for our services.

“ With respect to the approaching campaign, notwithstanding all my exertions, no provisions are ready ; there is a sad deficiency of arms. Great expences have been incurred for brilliant projects ; but the essential point has been neglected. The best determination which can be taken, is to hazard nothing, to support as much as possible an air of superiority over the enemy without undertaking the projected sieges ; to confine ourselves to the reduction of the mountainous country ; to occupy the strong holds ;

and to open such a communication as will secure a retreat for the french troops, should any contest arise between the courts of Versailles and Madrid, on the terms of peace."

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Alluding to the queen and princess, though without naming them, he continued :

" They not only govern the king, but direct all affairs. They place no confidence in any minister who is capable of governing. A presumptuous restlessness carries them beyond bounds. They flatter themselves with recovering all they have lost, and preserving all they possess ; while there is reason to fear that all may be lost. The queen, proud and high spirited, ill brooks the sacrifices which are necessary to obtain peace ; the princess conforms to her sentiments, but doubtless, labours to maintain herself against a formidable faction ; the king acts only from the impulse of one or both. Thus the government floats with a current of prejudice, without order and without stability. Spanish tardiness heaps up the measure of embarrassment.

" The spaniards are more discontented than ever. They murmur at the little consideration which they enjoy, and the preference given to italians and flemings. They expect to see the government entirely confided to foreigners. The phantom of a council of war is without power ; its resolutions are only followed when approved

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by the secret cabinet, which reserves to itself the minutest details ; nothing is carried into execution, because no one knows to whom to apply in the most trifling concern. The evil is incurable, but our sovereign must be apprised of it, that he may know how to act when he has business with this court. A blind confidence, founded on recent success, is the cause of this singular lethargy ; and although Philip feels his obligations to his grandfather, he will not be more tractable with regard to the terms of peace.”\*

Fixed habits of discretion ; the principles or at least the semblance of religion, and the sense of past obligations, did not suffice to repress, in the mind of Noailles, a love of rule : like the other ambassadors, we soon find him affected by the atmosphere of the spanish court.

He united with his friend Aguilar, in a design to alienate the king from the queen, and thus to undermine her influence, as well as that of the princess. He urged Philip to separate himself from her bed under the pretext of her ill health ; and adopting the cant of hypocrisy, recommended him to take a handmaid to his bosom. The very mention of the revolting proposal deeply affected a devout prince, who both from motives of religion and affection, had preserved inviolable fidelity to the marriage bed. He not only mani-

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 223—228.



fested his abhorrence, but instantly communicated the proposal to the queen and princess. Such an attempt justly roused the wounded feelings of the queen. She imparted it to her sister the duchess of Burgundy, and the princess to her protectress madame de Maintenon; and at the austere court of Versailles, where gallantry was no longer tolerated, it produced no less sensation than in Spain. Noailles was recalled; and Aguilar deprived both of his military command and civil offices, and exiled from court. The delicate cause of this change was however involved in mystery. The recal of Noailles was cloaked with the pretext of ill health; while the disgrace of Aguilar was ascribed to his disputes with Vendome; nor was the secret known, till it was disclosed by St. Simon, the great collector of court anecdotes, and the recorder of court scandal.\*

August.

From the memorial of Noailles, it was evident, that notwithstanding the weakness of Spain and its dependence on France, considerable difficulties would arise in obtaining the assent of Philip and his heterogeneous council, to the dismemberment of the monarchy, and the grant of commercial advantages to the maritime powers. The

\* We should scarcely have relied on the mere authority of St. Simon, had we not found it supported by obscure hints in the *Memoires of Noailles and St. Philippe*.—Noailles, t. 4, p. 230, 237. t. 5, p. 142.—St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 8.—St. Simon, t. v. p. 510.

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recal therefore of a nobleman in the confidence of both courts, and, before the late imprudent attempt, highly respected both by Philip and his queen ; so agreeable to the princess, as well as so conciliating in his demeanor towards the spanish nobles, could not fail to throw additional obstacles in the way of the pending negotiation. He was succeeded by the marquis of Bonnac, who, in order to avoid disputes of etiquette, was only invested with the character of envoy extraordinary. His instructions, drawn up by Torci, will exhibit the peculiar embarrassments which existed in the relations between France and Spain, and at the same time will shew the selfish policy of the court of Versailles, which, amid professions of disinterestedness and anxiety to secure the integrity of the monarchy, was only anxious to purchase favourable terms at the expence of Spain.

August 5.

After detailing the preceding conduct of Louis in regard to Spain, since the accession of Philip, Torci adverted to the recent negotiations in Holland, and the inflexible resolution of the allies. " They were," he observed, " convinced that the union between France and Spain would never be broken while Philip maintained himself on the throne. Nevertheless, the king has *concluded no treaty with his grandson*, he has always supported him *gratuitously*, and *without*

*condition ; he only acquiesced in the wishes of the spaniards, when he accepted the will of Charles the second.* He was, therefore, at liberty either to continue or to withdraw his aid ; and, perhaps, he would long ago have withdrawn it, had he felt less affection for his grandson, or less esteem for the spaniards.

“ Since the battle of Villaviciosa, the enemy have softened their tone. They found that all their efforts would not deprive Philip of the crown ; they are desirous that he should accept the share which they before refused to allow, and have made indirect attempts for that purpose.\* But the king of France would not understand their hints ; he continued the war without any further demand for peace. His decision and firmness produced a good effect. The new succours have convinced the allies that the conquest of Spain is impossible : peace is at length become the object of their wishes. A close union between France and Spain is necessary, for the advantage of both ; but it must not bear the smallest appearance of dependence on the part of Spain. Even could the king regulate the affairs of that kingdom, it would not be prudent, because it would only excite the jea-

\* This, doubtless, alludes to the clandestine overtures made at this period by the tory party.

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lousy of the european powers. Let the interest of the two crowns be united, while each is governed according to its peculiar usages and maxims. At the same time, the enemy, who consider Spain as merely dependent on the orders of the king of France, must not be permitted to flatter themselves with having sown divisions between the two kings. The appearance of a perfect concert will be as useful for the attainment of peace, as for the prosecution of war.

“ For some years, the true state of Spain has been carefully concealed. Whatever may have been the motive, it becomes necessary to know the real situation of things, and the views of those who govern. Political affairs depend too much on the passions and interests of individuals, and it is no novelty to see the fate of princes regulated by the secret machinations of their courtiers. Bonnac will, therefore, endeavour to discover the hidden wheels which move the machine of government. It is a well known fact, that these secret springs of action are injurious to the real interests of Philip. The government is bitterly censured by the spaniards. Although their complaints may not be just ; yet they at least prove some disorder in the administration of affairs. We must discover the evil, to

provide the remedy ; and if Spain is to be supported, her resources must be well known, in order to ascertain the proportion of assistance.

“ The king of Spain, it is to be feared, is the first who is deceived. He considers presumption as a virtue ; he obstinately persists in his opinions once formed, and, if he makes a bad choice, he is not easily persuaded to recede. Should the queen employ her influence, as she seems inclined, the king will be happy to be directed by her, since he must necessarily be governed. For some time, the princess Orsini has affected to withdraw from business ; but her credit is undiminished. Philip deliberates and decides with the queen and the princess, and all other transactions are mere form. There is no doubt that the princess is zealous in the cause of France, and anxious to maintain the strict union between the two crowns ; yet she may err in her views, and support those as good, which are really bad. Bonnac, while he pays her *extreme deference*, must not conceal the truth.

“ The negotiations for peace, and the inevitable dismemberment of the monarchy, will have aggravated the prejudices of the spaniards against France. Yet neither their resentment nor opposition should, in the present circumstances, render them suspected. But those who are the secret advisers of the king, ought to

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convince him that the happiest moment of his reign will be that in which he signs a peace. Besides, he is too just not to sacrifice his own interests to the tranquillity of his people. Should he, however, neither be moved by this consideration, nor by a regard for France, the king will not be inclined to continue the war, when the only effect must be to procure a few advantages for Spain."

After enjoining Bonnac to investigate the complaints made by the french merchants of vexations in their commerce, he proceeds : " Bonnac will solicit the execution of the proper acts for ceding the sovereignty of the Netherlands to the elector of Bavaria. He will appear in all his proceedings to have nothing in view but the splendour of the spanish monarchy, and the recovery of the conquered provinces ; but he will not consider their loss as an evil. If Philip continues to possess Spain and the Indies, his states will be better governed, and the union between the two crowns more closely maintained, than if he were to recover the whole monarchy."

The french minister concludes his instructions with recommending a speedy overture to Portugal, through the agency of the jesuits, and to terminate the dispute with the pope without weakness ; because, to break with the court of



Rome, was only to labour for the enemy. He acquaints him with the mission of Mesnager to London, and transmits his instructions, with which Bonnac was to conform. "He must," it is said, "act boldly; peace is so necessary to both crowns, that no efforts should be spared to accelerate the desirable event."\*

Bonnac is represented as a man of talents, experience, and discretion, and he did not belie his character: notwithstanding the delicate situation of the two courts, he obtained from Philip full powers, authorising the king of France to gain the english by the cession of Gibraltar and Minorca, and the grant of the Asiento, with a port in America, for the security of their commerce.

In the interval, the negotiation had proceeded with England. The british ministry insisting on four places in America, Louis did not hesitate to make concessions even beyond their demands. Profiting by the selfish eagerness with which they grasped at commercial advantages, and desirous to leave a perpetual cause of irritation between England and Spain, he tendered as a pledge for the security of the Asiento trade, the permission to occupy Cadiz with a swiss garrison: This proposition was even given in one of the

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 246.

CHAP. 19. public papers in London, as an article of the  
 1711. preliminaries.\*

The bare mention of an expedient so dishonourable, roused the indignation of the whole spanish court. Philip himself declared that he would never listen to a proposition which would virtually occasion the loss of Cadiz, and the ruin of the spanish trade to America. Fortunately, the court of London declined the offer ; and, after a discussion of some months, reduced the pretensions to an establishment on the bank of the Rio de la Plata, where the british merchants might carry on the commerce of negroes, under the inspection of a spanish officer ; and an exemption from some of the duties imposed at Cadiz, on merchandize of british growth or fabric.

Louis acceded to these conditions in the name of his grandson, and communicated to him the result of his negotiation.

Sept. 18. " I trust," he wrote, " you will not repent of the confidence which you have reposed in me. If I engage you to conditions which you did not foresee, they are essentially necessary to evade the obstinate demands of the english for four places in the Indies. There are opportunities which must not be neglected. Do not, there-

\* Tindal, v. 17, p. 44.—Noailles, t. 4, p. 249.



fore, be surprised, if I have interpreted your full power without consulting you. Had I waited for your answer, much precious time must have been lost; and, I trust, I am labouring for your advantage, when I yield a little to preserve much, which you consented to abandon. I acquaint Bonnac with the details of the negotiation. As he will give you the necessary information, I have only to assure you, that I wish for peace as much for you as for myself; and that I shall be satisfied if I see you firmly established on the throne of Spain. In contributing to that great object to the utmost of my power, I give you a solid proof of my affection.”\*

The hints in this letter sufficed to alarm the king and queen, and when Bonnac communicated the conditions, the ministers exclaimed against terms so subversive of the honour and interests of Spain. Philip and the queen were borne away by the torrent. “Do not the english,” they said, “abuse our eagerness for peace, to extort all the advantages which their selfish policy can suggest? Will they not profit by the apathy into which we are thrown by these deceitful negotiations, to raise their exorbitant demands? Is not the best method of procuring peace a determined resolution to prosecute hos-

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 251.

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tilities? enemies are not disarmed by pity, but fear." They reluctantly announced their acquiescence; yet declared that they yielded from respect and gratitude to the king of France, and not from any dread of new misfortunes.\*

Oct. 8.

In virtue of this assent, the arrangements with the british ministry were matured, and special and general preliminaries were signed with Mesnager the french agent, who had been secretly dispatched to London, and admitted to an interview with the queen.

The special preliminaries, which related to England in particular, contained the acknowledgment of queen Anne and the protestant succession; the rasure of Dunkirk, the possession of Gibraltar, Minorca, and St Christopher's by the english; the transfer of the Asiento for thirty years, on the same terms as enjoyed by the french; privileges of trade in Spain equal to the subjects of France; and a portion of territory on the Rio de la Plata. The arrangements relative to the fisheries at Newfoundland, were reserved for future discussion.†

The general preliminaries, signed at the same time, contained the terms offered by France, as the basis of a peace with the allied powers.

The long contested question which had given

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 253.

† Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. 1, p. 374.

rise to the war, was passed over, with the vague and unsatisfactory declaration, that Louis would take just and reasonable measures to prevent the union of France and Spain under the same head. The acknowledgment of the protestant succession, and the rasure of Dunkirk, were again referred to ; a general promise was given of a barrier for the dutch in the Netherlands, and for the empire and Austria on the side of the Rhine ; and the whole was concluded with the favourite phrase, that all the belligerent powers should receive just and reasonable satisfaction.\*

As these terms implied the virtual acknowledgment of Philip as king of Spain, there was little reason to expect that he would hesitate in forwarding the negotiation, or demur in fulfilling his promise of ceding the Netherlands to the elector of Bavaria, as a prelude to their transfer to Austria, and the establishment of a barrier for the dutch. Yet new difficulties were raised on a point apparently decided, and the objections of the spanish court were coupled with a demand for the admission of their plenipotentiaries at the intended congress.

When Bonnac pressed for the cession of the Netherlands, and represented, that as the word of Louis was engaged, his honour would be affected by the refusal ; and that the objections made by

\* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. 1, p. 402.

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Spain to a general accommodation, would reduce Louis to enter into a separate treaty; the queen indignantly replied, "France has adopted a new system of proceeding. She expects every thing to be granted by Spain, and employs menaces when arguments fail!"

Philip also dwelt on the refusal of the allies to receive his plenipotentiaries, and could scarcely refrain from reproaching Louis for acquiescing in an exclusion so dishonourable to his crown. "What," he observed, to Bonnac, "will my subjects think, if they see the interests of the spanish monarchy placed in the hands of french plenipotentiaries?" "They will think," replied the ambassador, "that as your majesty relied on the king, your grandfather, for the support of the war, you ought also to rely on him for the conclusion of peace." To a similar objection from the minister, count Bergueik, he rejoined with asperity: "You ought not to forget that the plenipotentiaries of Charles the second had no other share in the peace of Ryswick, than affixing their signature." But all his arguments were fruitless, for both the king and queen were immovable; they persisted in requesting Louis to pay no less regard to the dignity than to the interests of his grandson, and engage the allies to expedite passports for his plenipotentiaries.\*

\* Nouvelles, t. 4, p. 264.



The french envoy was irritated by this decided opposition. "The best resolution," he wrote to his court, "is to proceed directly to the point, and not attempt to gain their consent, either by promises or threats. Secure the acquiescence of the english in what relates to Spain, and by their means, that of the dutch, and then extort the acquiescence of the spaniards. This is more suitable to the interests and dignity of France. For whatever is wrested from Spain, will appear a sacrifice to the cupidity of the enemy, and to the necessity of concluding peace ; whereas direct demands made to Philip, will create bitterness and distrust between the two courts ; and the king of France will be incessantly accused of sacrificing the interests of Spain to his own."

The chief instigator of this opposition was the count of Bergueik, who from the post of vice governor of the Netherlands, was called to the direction of the important departments of war and finance. Possessing a considerable share of the royal favour and confidence, he was the sole agent of the communications with Bonnac. From his long residence in the Netherlands, joined to the influence of his local connections, and frequent intercourse with the dutch, he had learned to appreciate the due importance of those valuable territories ; and while he

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suspected the sincerity of the british government, he was persuaded that a separate accommodation might easily be arranged with the states. His representations were favourably received both by Philip and the queen, who were equally proud of their late success, and equally zealous for the honour of their well earned crown. Even the princess Orsini, however attached to France, concurred or affected to concur in the sentiments of the sovereigns and minister.

Sept. 20.

“ The king,” observed Bonnac, “ forms no decision by himself. The queen is absolute mistress of his heart and mind. She has lofty thoughts, takes her resolution at the moment ; and having triumphed over so many misfortunes, she hears with indifference, nay with contempt, all representations of future danger. Prejudices derived from the experience of good, and contempt of adverse fortune, have made a deep impression on a person of her age.

“ The princess Orsini, more moderate, is alone capable of softening these high-flown sentiments of her royal mistress. Her credit is therefore necessary. She appears no less zealous for France than devoted to the king and queen ; yet she does not entertain the same notions on public affairs as prevail at Versailles. She will yield to argument, when she is persuaded that the interests of Spain are not sacri-

ficed. She is capable of rendering service, if we avoid wounding her delicacy, and convince her that we do not wish to act without her intervention. Doubtless the french cabinet would encounter obstacles perhaps even invincible, should Philip give his confidence to the spaniards.”\*

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Meanwhile the dutch government, encouraged by the discontented whigs in England as well as by the emperor, shewed scarcely less reluctance than Philip to accede to the proffered terms. Their repugnance was, however, at length overcome by the threats of England, and measures were settled for opening a congress of all the belligerent powers at Utrecht. Louis announced this arrangement to his grandson in a style which shews the embarrassment derived from the captious spirit manifested by the spanish court.

“ The dutch have at length consented to give passports to my plenipotentiaries. I do not know when the conferences will be opened, and when your ministers will be received. But before they depart, convince Bergueik if possible of the absurdity in attempting to negotiate separately with the dutch. Suffer me to manage your interests, and finish, I intreat you, the business of the elector of Bavaria, the delay of which is not honourable to your majesty, and

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 255.

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may injure the negotiation. Be assured that you will find in my advice no view except for your advantage."

Even the remonstrances and threats of Louis seemed now to have lost their effect. New difficulties were raised by Bergueik, and at length no other resource was left but to employ the agency of the princess. Fortunately means yet remained to overcome her real or affected delicacy.

After attaining all the honours which could be conferred on a subject, she aspired to the possession of a small but independent sovereignty. At her secret instigation, the queen had induced Philip, when he engaged to transfer the Netherlands to the elector of Bavaria, to reserve a small territory producing an annual revenue of 30,000 crowns; but no hint was given of the purpose for which it was destined. As Philip was now called upon to fulfil his promise to the elector, he recurred to this petty sovereignty. Designating the princess Orsini as the person for whom the gift was intended, he requested the intervention of his grandfather to obtain the acquiescence of the elector, and the guaranty of the allies. The queen also seconded his instances by an application to Madame de Maintenon.

July 17,  
1711.

"You doubtless know the demand which the



king made to his grandfather on the conclusion of the treaty, by which the Low Countries were ceded to the elector of Bavaria, to reserve for us a petty sovereignty of 30,000 crowns, annual value.

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“ The king of France acquiesced, and the elector consented. We now demand the fulfilment of this promise. The king writes to day to his grandfather on this subject, and I intreat you to speak to him on my part. Although we regard this affair as already settled, and likely to meet with no difficulty, we shall, nevertheless, be grateful for it. I think you will interest yourself the more readily in it, when you know that we destine this principality for the princess Orsini, who deserves it for her past services, and merits also the interest which you may take in her favour; for, I can assure you, you have not a better friend. Would it not be shameful for the king and myself, after all our obligations, to give her no marks of our esteem? There is no dignity, except this, which we can confer on her, because she already possesses all; so, I think, no one can blame our gratitude.

“ For you, my dear madam, I have no doubt of the pleasure which you will receive from it, and that our request will meet with your entire approbation. I must also add, that what the king gives is his own, and no detriment to the

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king, his grandfather ; and it will, doubtless please him to see a devoted subject, like the princess Orsini, so highly distinguished. I am, I confess, sufficiently vain, with doing more for my camerara-mayor than preceding queens have done for theirs. She will not abuse it, and there is no fear that she will keep up large armies to alarm her neighbours. I conclude then that we shall enjoy this satisfaction ; but to you, my dear madam, and to my sister, I would have the obligation, that it should meet with no difficulty, and be concluded without delay, since it wholly depends on the king our grandfather, who can induce the elector to accede to so reasonable a demand.”\*

Louis promised his concurrence, and, as a prelude to her elevation to the rank of a sovereign, she received the congratulations of the court, and an order was given that she should be addressed with the title of highness. After a slight demur, the spanish nobility acquiesced, and the princess had at length the flattering prospect of attaining her darling object.†

October.

Grateful for the support of Louis, she laid aside her scruples, silenced or over-ruled the objections of Bergueik, and obtained from Philip, not only an unequivocal assent to the conditions concluded in his name ; but a declaration that he

\* Neailles, t. 4, p. 381. † St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 29.

would no longer press for the admission of his plenipotentiaries into the congress, and would give full powers to Louis to continue and conclude the negotiation.

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The accustomed harmony and confidence seemed once more restored between the two bourbon courts; and the correspondence of the two monarchs again afforded proofs of personal regard and mutual attention.

"Do not," observed Louis, "be surprised to find yourself called only duke of Anjou. These are the last efforts of the vulgarity and despair of the dutch party, who are desirous for the continuance of the war. They will soon change their style, as they are at present obliged to change their conduct."

December.

"You will have learned," he wrote in a subsequent letter, "from M. de Bonnac, that I was not deceived when I foresaw the difficulty of procuring passports for your plenipotentiaries. I know the measures, which the *good party* in England are obliged to keep to realise their favourable intentions: be assured that they have done much in obtaining the acceptance of the preliminaries, with the clause which I caused to be inserted, expressly to secure your continuance on the throne of Spain. We should lose too much by wishing to hurry a work which is well begun. Your majesty, therefore, must not be

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surprised, if the passports, of which you are so desirous, are still delayed. It would be but a weak reason to press the grant of them, to say, that it is the interest of the english to deserve your friendship. The nation is not sufficiently unanimous to be touched by this consideration; and those who are desirous of peace, think they have already done enough for you to deserve some gratitude on your part.

“ Speak not, therefore, of the interest which they have to acquire your good will, nor of protests which would be foreign to the present juncture. Send your plenipotentiaries when you please. After the conferences are opened, I will take the proper measures for their admission; but forward the peace, and think what would be your situation, should I be obliged to join my forces against you. To prevent such a calamity, I have required a new power from you, for there will be no time to lose if an advantageous conclusion can be effected. You are aware that the power you have already sent me to treat with England, would at present be injurious to your interests, if I suffered it to appear,\* and you may rely on my regard that I shall do nothing to your prejudice.

“ I have just received your letter of the 15th,

\* Alluding to the commercial advantages which were already granted to the english as the price of their defection.

and learn with pleasure the resolution you have taken to cause the patent which the elector of Bavaria demands, to be expedited. I assure you, I will do nothing contrary to your interest; but, I love you too well to have observed without pain, your tardiness in fulfilling your engagements. Knowing your sentiments, I am aware of the violence you do yourself."

Philip replied, "The marquis of Bonnac, by the orders of your majesty, has communicated to me the state of the negotiation for peace, and the difficulties made by the english and dutch to receive my plenipotentiaries. He has also demanded, in your name, another full power, to treat with them. My desire to give you new marks of my gratitude and friendship, joined to that of contributing as much as possible to your satisfaction, and the tranquillity of all who are implicated in this cruel war, would not permit me to hesitate in sending you this new full power, that you may, in my name, sign the preliminaries with the dutch, as you have done with the english. I hope they will be shortly concluded. I doubt not, I shall soon feel the effects, and that England and Holland will acknowledge me, and admit my plenipotentiaries at the congress. I flatter myself, you will employ your interest to this end, as a grandfather who has so much regard for me, and that I shall have no

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cause to repent of the confidence I repose in you. I send an ostensible letter for the english, that they may not be surprised to find the preliminary advantages which I have granted them, are not inserted in the present full power, and that they should be apprised of the reason which prevented me from inserting them."

In the midst of this interesting negotiation, Philip had the additional satisfaction of being relieved from the presence of his rival.

In consequence of the death of his brother, the emperor Joseph, Charles quitted Barcelona in September, leaving his queen as regent of his spanish dominions; and the command of the army, which had been augmented with a reinforcement of 7,000 men, to Staremberg. He took leave of the catalans, in an affectionate letter, stating the causes of his absence, praising their attachment, announcing his speedy return, and recommending his queen as the most precious pledge which he could intrust to their fidelity.\* In his progress through Italy, he was received by the republics of Venice and Genoa, and the dukes of Parma and Tuscany, as king of Spain, and made his triumphal entry into Milan, amidst the acclamations of his new subjects. He was here saluted with the joyful tidings of his elevation to the imperial throne, by the unanimous

Sept. 6.

\* History of Europe for 1711, p. 361.

consent of all the members of the empire, except the electors of Bavaria and Cologne, whose votes were suspended for their contumacy.


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On the 22d of December he was crowned at Frankfort, in the customary forms, and with unusual pomp. In addition to his other titles of king of Hungary and Bohemia, he assumed that of king of Spain ; and testified his resolution to assert his rights by creating several knights of the golden fleece. From thence he repaired to Vienna, took quiet possession of the hereditary dominions of the House of Austria, which had devolved on him by the death of his brother, and made the most vigorous preparations to continue the war against the House of Bourbon, and to traverse the pending negotiations.

But the endeavours of the emperor, though aided by the support of the dutch, and the whigs in opposition, were of no avail. The friends of the bourbon cause had the satisfaction to witness a breach of the public correspondence between England and Austria, in consequence of the dismissal of the imperial minister, count Gallas, for caballing with the whigs. Nor was even the subsequent mission of Eugene himself to London more effectual. That great general was received with cold politeness by those in power, and, at the same time, exposed to the most ridiculous as well as calumnious accusations, which party malice

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could invent. He had the mortification to witness the disgrace of his injured friend, the duke of Marlborough; and, after his fruitless attempts to bring the queen to a sense of her honour, and the interests of her crown, departed from England, leaving the cause of his imperial master more hopeless than ever.\*

Meanwhile the british ministry had extorted the consent of the dutch to their recent arrangement, by the threat of concluding a separate accommodation; and, in the beginning of 1712, conferences were opened at Utrecht, by the plenipotentiaries of France, England, Holland, and the duke of Savoy. The emperor, also, finding remonstrances fruitless, did not refuse to take a share in the negotiation, though he affected to receive the propositions of France, not as preliminaries, or as obligatory, but as simple projects for deliberation. To avoid irritating discussions, no minister was admitted from either of the contending parties, as king of Spain.

At the second conference, propositions were brought forward on both sides; by France, according to the clandestine arrangements with the british ministry, and by the emperor according to the principles of the grand alliance. But the increasing division among the allies favoured the views of France; and at a congress, professedly

\* House of Austria, vol. 2, p. 2.





called for the purpose of a joint negotiation, Louis succeeded in leading the different parties into separate discussions of their respective demands, and thus daily widened the breach. He likewise seized every pretext of chicane and delay, to obstruct the public conferences; while he redoubled his efforts to cajole and influence the court of England, on which the continuance of peace or war ultimately depended. In consequence of this change, Polignac, one of his plenipotentiaries, exultingly wrote to Torci, "We now play the part of the dutch at Gertruydenberg, and they ours. It is a perfect retaliation."\*

During the delays occasioned by these artifices, Louis maintained a constant and intimate intercourse with the court of London, by means of his private agents. As he justly dreaded the abilities and influence of Marlborough, he employed the assistance of the court of St. Germans, and the jacobite party, to co-operate with the british ministry, in removing their great antagonist. He had finally the satisfaction to see him driven from power, and exposed to the malice of his enemies, and the hatred of the nation he had so ably served. On this event he justly observed to his agents, "The dismissal of Marlborough will do for us all we can desire."† The command of the army was transferred to the duke

\* Torci, t. 3, p. 406. † Semerville's Queen Anne, p. 497.

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of Ormond, whose attachment to the exiled family was not unknown.

The effect of the pending negotiations was felt even in Catalonia. Assured of the servile support of the british ministry, Louis adopted the advice of Noailles, to risk nothing, and confine the military operations to a war of posts. Nor was he disappointed in the expectations he had formed from the co-operation of England; for, although, to justify the diminution of the army in the Netherlands, the ministers expressed great solicitude to prosecute the war in Spain; yet they soon adopted methods equally effectual to thwart the operations in that quarter.

The duke of Argyle was dispatched with a trifling reinforcement, to assume the command of the british troops, but came without remittances, and was detained at Genoa, until he had raised a loan on his own personal credit. The subsequent supplies, extorted by his complaints, were granted with the same sparing hand, and his utmost exertions only tended to maintain the passes, and harrass the enemy in a series of frequent, but trifling, skirmishes. At length, an indisposition obliging him to quit the camp, he repaired to Minorca, where he more usefully employed his active mind in fortifying Port Mahon, and strengthening the defences of an island, which was already conceded to Great Britain.

Nor were the operations on the part of Philip more effectual. Vendome, indeed, too spirited to submit to the temporising orders of his sovereign, attempted to resume the offensive, by laying siege to Cardona. But the cabals of the court, and the want of supplies, joined to the judicious manœuvres of the imperial general, Staremberg, compelled him to retreat with disgrace; and, at the close of the campaign, the two hostile armies reoccupied nearly the same positions as at its commencement.\*

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\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 22.—History of Europe for 1711.—Cunningham, v. 2, p. 371.—Ortiz, lib. 22, c. 15.—Targe and other Historians as before.—Correspondence of Lord Bolingbroke, passim.—Report of the Secret Committee of 1715.—Memoires de Polignac.

## CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

1712—1714.

*Deaths of the new dauphin and his eldest son, and hopes of Philip to be called to the french throne—Negotiations to prevent the union of the two crowns—Correspondence of Louis and Philip—Philip agrees to renounce his pretensions to France—Progress of the arrangement between France and England—England separates from the allies, and agrees to a suspension of arms—Success of the french in the Netherlands—Philip makes his public renunciation—Establishment of the new french colony of Louisiana—The dutch compelled to accept the mediation of England—The ministers of Philip admitted to the congress—Conclusion of the negotiations for peace—Treaties of Utrecht, Rastadt, and Baden.*

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**PHILIP** had now secured the possession of Spain and the Indies, by sacrifices which, however reluctantly made, were not ultimately detrimental to the real interests of his crown, nor favourable even to the union of those very powers to whom they were conceded. But in the height of his satisfaction, new hopes and fears were excited by a disastrous mortality in the elder branch of his family. The decease of his father, the dauphin, was followed in the course of a short period by the death of his brother, the duke of Burgundy, with that of his nephew, the duke of Brittany; while the duke of Anjou, a sickly infant not two years old, was thus left the only bar against his succession to the throne of his ancestors.

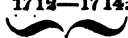
Philip was of too sanguine a disposition, and too affectionately attached to France, not to feel more hope than regret from these events. Daily anticipating the death of the infant prince, he was so anxious to return to France in order to assert the rights of his birth, that he was, with difficulty, persuaded by Vendôme and Bonnac to suspend his departure, till he could obtain more precise information, and receive the advice of his grandfather, which he was bound to respect both by gratitude and affection.

In this juncture, an active correspondence ensued between the courts of France and England, to obviate the consequences of these unlooked for events. Although the separation of the two crowns was a condition of the preliminary articles settled with England; yet Louis, no less than Philip, was solicitous to evade its execution; and he hoped to attain his object by means of the ascendancy which he had acquired over the british ministry. He, however, made an offer to concert with the queen the necessary measures for preventing the much dreaded union.

Accordingly the british cabinet sent Gualtier to Versailles with a laboured memorial, demanding the immediate renunciation of the crown of France by Philip, to be sanctioned by the spanish cortes, and confirmed in the future

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treaty under the guaranty of the contracting powers.\*

An awful suspense ensued, which evinced the embarrassment and secret inclinations of the french monarch; and it was not till after repeated applications that he announced his decision in a counter-memorial. In regard to the proposed renunciation, he frankly declared in the strongest terms which language could furnish, "No power on earth can alter the constitutional law of the kingdom. The prince, next to the crown, necessarily succeeds. He owes his crown not to any edict, not to any decree, not to the generosity of any one, but to the law. This law is considered in France as the work of Him who has established all monarchies, and by Him only can it be abolished. *No renunciation, therefore, can destroy it, and if the king of Spain should renounce for the sake of peace, and in obedience to my will, those, who might receive such a renunciation as an expedient sufficient to prevent the evil we wish to avoid, would only deceive themselves and build upon sand. It would likewise prove the source of civil commotions, and open the way to a general war in Europe.*"†

Now it was that the wisdom and foresight of

\* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. 2, p. 207.

† Torci, t. 3, p. 292.—Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. 2, p. 232.




those who had planned and consolidated the grand alliance, became as evident as the rashness and folly of the new ministry in England, who had precipitated their country into dependence on France, and had no resource left to prevent a far more dangerous union of power and dominion under one head, than that which they had pretended to dread in the person of the new emperor.

After the unequivocal declaration just cited, that the divine and indefeasible right of succession to the throne of France, could not be annulled by any human power, the obvious reply would have been, "Since then Philip cannot renounce the rights of his birth, he must relinquish Spain." But such a just and spirited determination could not be expected from men who had already sacrificed the safety and interests of their country, and who were styled, even by Mesnager, the plenipotentiaries of the french king.\* They persisted in demanding a formality which they were assured was nugatory; and Bolingbroke, with a sophistry which at once excites our contempt and indignation, replied, "We are willing to believe that you in France are convinced God alone can abolish the law, on which the rights of your succession are founded; but you will permit us in Great Britain to be

\* Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 497.—*Note.*

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also convinced, that a prince can depart from his right by a voluntary cession, and that he, in whose favour this renunciation is made, will be supported in his pretensions by the powers who are guarantees of the treaty.”\*

As Louis still demurred, the british ministry assumed a firmness which they had not before ventured to display. Mr. Harley, the cousin of the treasurer, was dispatched to Utrecht, to announce the inflexible resolution of England, not to recede from the demand. Lord Strafford, one of the british plenipotentiaries, was recalled, till the answer of Louis was known; all public intercourse with the french ministers was broken off, and the proposals of France for a suspension of arms rejected. The british government even endeavoured to regain the confidence of these allies, whom it had so shamefully abandoned; and, detaching reinforcements to the Netherlands, gave indications of a resolution to resume hostilities.

As the season for military operations was now returned, Louis was too prudent again to trust the fate of his crown to the fortune of war. He, therefore, acquiesced in the demand, and Torci pledged the royal word to obtain the consent of

\* Letter to Torci.—Corresp. v. 2, p. 227.—It must be confessed that this remark comes with an ill grace from the minister who had just proved the futility of the most solemn guaranties, by the breach of the grand alliance.



Philip. "I hope," he said, "the king of Spain will conform to the advice of the king. But if, contrary to my expectations, he should not submit, the king will take all the measures which the queen of Great Britain may think proper, to decide *even by force, if necessary*; the choice of the catholic king, and secure peace to Europe."\*

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This promise was accepted with alacrity. The temporary spirit of the british cabinet evaporated, and secret instructions were instantly transmitted to Ormond, restraining him from either risking a battle or engaging in a siege, though he was to conduct himself in such a manner as to give no jealousy to the allies. This virtual suspension of arms, which was allowed by Bolingbroke himself to have been the salvation of the french army, was immediately repaid by an attack on the british West India islands, in order to crush our trade in that quarter at the moment of returning peace.†

July and  
August.

\* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. 2, p. 278.—This gratuitous offer to employ force against Philip, excites a smile, when we recollect the horror affected by Louis, at the bare hint in the conferences at Gertruydenberg, and the pathetic declamations of some of our own writers on this outrage to his royal feelings.

† "We expected," writes the duped and chagrined minister, "that Cassart's squadron might be gone to the coast of Brazil, or to Surinam; but we never imagined that our colonies would have been attacked by him, at a time when we were knitting the bands of friendship between the two nations, with all possible industry, &c." \* \* \* "Compare this conduct with that of the queen, the moment I read the letter from Monsierr de Torcy, by which it appeared that the king of France would oblige his grandson to accept

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1712—1714.

April 18.

Louis had no sooner effected an arrangement with the british ministry, than he imparted his instructions to Philip. After announcing the proffered alternative of Spain or France, he observed, "The instances of the british ministry become more and more urgent. The necessity of peace daily increases, and the means of prosecuting the war are exhausted. I shall, therefore, be compelled to treat on conditions equally unpleasant to you and myself, if you do not obviate the fatal extremity by making your choice. Bonnac will impart to you my sentiments on this delicate business, which admits of no deliberation. As I rely on your affection for me and the House of Bourbon, I exhort you to adopt the advice I am under the necessity of giving, which is not contrary to the friendship I feel for you. It is, to retain Spain and the Indies, and yield to the obstinacy of the english, by renouncing the crown of France; *a condition with which they will be satisfied, and which they are persuaded can be carried into effect.*"\*

Philip having complied with this injunction, and made his election for Spain, the british the alternative of quitting one of the two monarchies, her orders were dispatched to the duke of Ormond to engage in neither siege nor battle, and she prevented the French even from making the demand. *I will not say that this order saved their army from being beat, but I think, in my conscience, it did.*"

Bolingbroke to Prior, Sept. 19, 1711.—Corresp. v. 3, p. 77.


\* Torci, t. 3, p. 299.

ministry, who had been cajoled by Torci\* into a belief that he would prefer the reversion of France, now discovered that this arrangement would still leave the important question dependent on uncertain contingency: for if Philip retained Spain, there was no bar to his eventual succession in France, except an engagement already declared in the most positive terms of no effect. To lure him therefore from Spain, the queen was induced to offer a new alternative, namely, to relinquish Spain to the House of Savoy, to receive in return the immediate possession of Sicily, and the dominions of Piemont, Savoy, the duchy of Montferrat, all of which were to be united with France, should he be called to that crown, except Sicily, which in that case was to be transferred to the House of Austria.

The nervous and irritable mind of Philip had been greatly agitated during the progress of this negotiation; but he was peculiarly affected by this last proposal, which promised too high advantages to France, not to receive the warmest support from Louis himself. Torci has pre-

\* "Si vous demandez, Monsieur, quelle precaution l'on prendra pour assurer une renonciation que je vous ai representé comme contraire à l'ordre etabli en France pour la succession à la couronne, je repondrai, premièrement, *qu' il n'y a pas lieu de croire que le Roi d' Espagne choisisse la Couronne d' Espagne preferablement à celle de ses pères*, par mille raisons, aisées à comprendre, et trop longues à deduire." Torci to Bolingbroke, April 8, 1712. Corresp. v. 2, p. 246. It is worthy of remark that this letter was written only ten days before that of Louis quoted in the text.

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1712—1714.



May 17.

served the interesting correspondence of the two monarchs on this occasion.

“ I own to you,” wrote Louis, “ that notwithstanding the disproportion between the respective states, I have been sensibly gratified to think you will continue to reign; that I can always regard you as my successor, and that your situation will permit you to visit me from time to time. Judge how agreeable it would be to me, to be able to rely on you for the future; to be assured that if the dauphin lives, I shall find in you a regent accustomed to command, capable of preserving order, and repressing the cabals in my kingdom. If this infant should die, which from his sickly constitution is but too probable, you will enter on my succession according to the order of your birth; and I shall have the consolation of leaving to my people, a virtuous sovereign, able to rule them, and who in succeeding to me, will unite, to the crown, states so considerable as Savoy, Piemont, and the Montferrat. I am so gratified with this idea, and principally with the pleasure of passing with you and the queen a part of the remnant of my life, and informing you myself of the state of my affairs, that I can imagine nothing equal to the pleasure you will give me if you accept this new project.

“ If the gratitude and affection of your sub-

jects are with you pressing motives to continue among them, I may say that you owed the same sentiments to me, to your family, and to your country, before you owed them to Spain. I now require you to give them effect. I shall regard as the greatest happiness of my life, your resolution to draw nearer to me, and preserve rights which one day you may in vain regret, if you relinquish them.

“ I have, however, engaged to treat on the principle, that you will renounce these rights to preserve only Spain and the Indies. If your majesty should reject the proposal of this exchange with the duke of Savoy, all I can do is to leave you the choice, the necessity of concluding peace becoming daily more pressing.”\*

In the conflict of contending passions which this proposal roused in the mind of Philip, his ambition assumed the tincture of devotion, and he did not adopt a final decision until he had addressed himself in supplication to the King of kings. After receiving the holy communion, he summoned into his presence the marquis of Bonnac, and said: “ I have made my choice. No temptation shall ever induce me to abandon this crown, which I consider as the gift of God.” He then delivered a letter to his grandfather, announcing his resolution.

\* Torci, t. 3, p. 368.

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After thanking him for past marks of his friendship, he proceeded, "The idea your majesty holds forth of being placed near you, would be highly flattering to me, if I deemed myself capable of accepting the new offer tendered by England; but there are many reasons against it. It appears to me much more beneficial that a branch of our House of Bourbon should reign in Spain, *than to place this crown on the head of a prince, of whose friendship we cannot be assured*: this advantage outweighs that of eventually uniting to France, Savoy, Piedmont, and the Montferrat. I think therefore, that I better prove my regard to you and your subjects in keeping my resolution, than in adopting the new plan proposed by England. I thus equally give peace to France; I secure to her as an ally, a monarchy which might otherwise at a future period be joined to her enemies. At the same time I follow myself the *path which appears most conformable to my glory, and to the welfare of my subjects*, who by their zeal and attachment have so essentially contributed to maintain the crown on my head."\*

This decision being imparted to the british ministry, the next object was to settle the formalities of the renunciations, and the conditions for the suspension of arms. As Louis had re-

\* Torci, t. 3, p. 312.

peatedly violated the most solemn engagements, the british ministry proposed that the acts, which were intended to secure the separation of France and Spain, should be sanctioned by the states general of France and the cortes of Spain, as the highest legislative authorities in both kingdoms. But as the confirmation of the states general would have rendered future evasion\* difficult, Louis eluded the demand under the plea, that the convention of that assembly was dangerous to the royal authority, and might give rise to civil troubles as on former occasions. In return he offered the sanction of the parliaments, as more conformable to existing usages, and to the constitution of the monarchy. Bolingbroke made no objection to an alternative which in reality rendered the engagement a mere form, and obtained the acquiescence of the queen and his colleagues.† A suspension of arms was next concluded; and Louis even consented that Dunkirk should be yielded to the english as a

\* It is needless to examine the sincerity of these renunciations; because the declaration of Louis already quoted, and the subsequent conduct of Philip, prove that they were considered by both princes as vain and idle formalities. On this subject the reader is referred to a pamphlet of the times, *The Sighs of Europe*, in which this question is treated with equal irony and argument.—State of Europe, for 1712, p. 225—6.

† Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. 2.—Duclos, t. 1, p. 63.

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temporary deposit, the day on which the armistice commenced.\*

Meanwhile the campaign had opened; and although Ormond was restricted from joining in offensive operations, yet the presence of a british force contributed to keep the french in awe; while Eugene, with the imperial and dutch troops, besieged and captured Quesnoy.

July 4.

The loss of this fortress was, however, amply compensated to Louis by the proclamation of the armistice on the part of England, and the separation of the british troops from the allied army. This incident aggravated the bitter disputes which had already arisen from the inactivity and defection of England. The dutch opposed the march of the troops destined to take possession of Dunkirk; while the auxiliaries in the pay of the two maritime powers refused to obey the orders of the british commander, and generously resolved to share the fate of those with whom they had so frequently triumphed.

July 17.

The consequence of these disputes was the defection of England from the grand alliance. The discussions at Utrecht were suspended, and the negotiation confined to the courts of Ver-

\* May we again recal the attention of the reader to the negotiations of the Hague and Gertruydenburgh, and remind him of the cavils made by Louis and his new friends, against the demand of cautionary fortresses of far less importance than Dunkirk.





sailles and London. England withheld the pay of the auxiliaries ; a garrison was transported by sea from Dover to Dunkirk ; Ormond seized Ghent and Bruges to secure the retreat of the troops under his command, and arrangements were immediately commenced for a suspension of hostilities both by land and sea.

Notwithstanding the departure of the english, the imperialists and dutch, with the auxiliaries who were taken into their pay, continued offensive operations, and after the surrender of Quesnoy invested Landrecies. It was hoped that their united forces, directed by the abilities of Eugene, would obtain some brilliant success which might suspend or frustrate the pending negotiation. But their hopes were vain ; for the departure of the english gave Villars, the french commander, the advantage of superior numbers, while it revived the spirit of his troops. That able general in his turn became the assailant. He forced the lines of Denain, where a strong corps was posted to cover the passage of convoys to Eugene, and killed or made prisoners above 5,000 men. This brilliant exploit decided the fate of the campaign. The siege of Landrecies was instantly raised, and by the precipitate retreat of the allies, the french reduced Marchiennes, which contained their principal magazines. So fortunate a blow was followed

July 24.

July 30.

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Sept. 4.

Oct. 4.

by a rapid series of successes. Douay, Quesnoy, and Bouchain were recovered in the presence of Eugene himself; and at the close of the campaign no army remained in the field capable of arresting the progress of the french.

The british cabinet scarcely less rejoiced at the misfortunes of the allies, than the french themselves. But their exultation was soon checked by unexpected difficulties in the negotiation. To remedy the mischiefs which were likely to flow from their impolitic concessions, they now found it necessary to raise a new power in Italy, as a counterpoise to the House of Bourbon; and on the surrender of Dunkirk, they brought forward a series of demands in favour of the duke of Savoy. They required for him a barrier on the side of the Alps, calculated to give him an entrance into Dauphiné; the cession of Sicily, and the eventual succession of Spain after the extinction of Philip's issue.

These demands, scarcely expected by the bourbon sovereigns, after the past liberality of the british government, suspended that confidence which had hitherto prevailed. After some ineffectual expedients to arrange these important points, Bolingbroke himself repaired to Fontainebleau to hasten a final adjustment.

August 19.

Louis had now the gratification to see the minister of that nation to which only a few



months before he had humbly sued for peace, appear in his court, a suppliant for terms far less advantageous than those he had himself tendered in vain. It is not probable that considerations of gratitude or humanity would have prevented so arrogant a sovereign from retaliating for past mortifications ; but he was sagacious enough to discover that he might presume too confidently on the compliance of the british ministry. The queen had formally communicated to parliament the general principles which were to form the basis of an accommodation ; and the spirit of the nation, so long accustomed to victory, was too elated to receive the law from a prince whom they had recently seen a suppliant for peace. Besides, the declining health of the queen rendered it not improbable that the throne might shortly be filled by a sovereign of far different character and principles ; at the same time his own advanced age, as well as the infancy of his apparent successor, rendered him anxious to prevent the revival of domestic troubles by the restoration of external peace.

June 17.

These considerations weighed with the french monarch. In a few conferences Bolingbroke and Torci amicably arranged the most material points in dispute. A general suspension of arms for four months was settled between the two countries ; and both ministers in their subse-

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quent correspondence exulted in the consternation of the allies, and considered the peace as already concluded.

July 8.

In consequence of these arrangements the stipulated renunciations were formally made. Philip first announced the design before his court and council. After hinting at the terms of the peace in general, he added, "The king my grandfather has urged me to prefer the kingdom of France to Spain; but neither his instances nor the prospect of succeeding to the great power possessed by my ancestors, have been able to outweigh my gratitude to the spaniards, whose loyalty has preserved the crown on my head. For their sake, I would not only prefer Spain to all the monarchies in the world, but would rather be reduced to the possession of the smallest portion of this kingdom than abandon so faithful a people. To prove the truth of what I now say, and my earnest desire that this crown should descend to my posterity, I declare that I am willing to renounce both in my own person and those of my descendants, my rights to the crown of France in favour of my brother the duke of Berri and his heirs, and of my uncle the duke of Orleans."\*

This decision was the same day announced to the nation in general, by a royal decree.

\* State of Europe for 1712, p. 203.

Shortly afterwards, lord Lexington repaired to Spain, to witness the ceremony of the renunciation on the part of England.

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In any other negotiation except the present, it might have appeared extraordinary, that although according to the preliminary arrangements the title of Philip was not to be acknowledged until he had fulfilled the conditions stipulated in his name, the condition was evaded by a quibble. Torci observed that as the treaty was only *conditional*, the acknowledgment was *conditional* likewise ; and Bolingbroke, with his usual complaisance, immediately discovered that it was “ *natural, civil, and unexceptionable*, and any other mode of proceeding absurd and inconsistent.” He therefore revoked, by his own authority, the positive orders given to lord Lexington. The acknowledgment was accordingly made in a private audience ; and Philip was thus enabled to render almost nugatory the conditions stipulated for England, and to evade the demands in favour of the catalans.\*

Meanwhile, the proper measures were adopted for assembling the cortes, and lord Lexington arranged with the spanish ministers the form and terms of the renunciation.

On the 5th of November, Philip signed and

\* Report of the Secret Committee.—Political State.—Tindal, v. 16, p. 257. Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. 3, p. 68.

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swore to his renunciation, in a full council of state, the british agent attending in a private capacity. In the afternoon, he proceeded to the hall where the cortes or states were assembled, accompanied by the president of Castile, and the members of the council, and after declaring his renunciation, required them to sanction it with their assent. The account of this ceremony cannot be better given than in the words of the queen herself, to Madame de Maintenon.

Nov. 6.

" You will learn from M. de Bonnac, what he witnessed yesterday ; so it is needless for me to enter into a detail. I will only say, that in the morning, the king read his renunciation of the french crown, with all the clauses which were required, signed it, and solemnly swore to maintain it, calling as witnesses the chiefs of our household and the counsellors of state. In the afternoon, all the states of the kingdom assembled in a capacious and handsome apartment, which was filled with a concourse of well dressed persons, though large without confusion.

" The king began by a discourse which he delivered perfectly well, and with which the whole assembly was satisfied ; for if I alone had been so, you would not perhaps have relied on my approbation. Then a paper was read containing a longer detail of the reasons for which the king had assembled the states, and of the

conditions settled between France and England, for the conclusion of peace. Afterwards a deputy of the town of Burgos spoke in the name of the whole kingdom, and made the king a reply expressive of their extreme gratitude for the sacrifice to which the king submitted from a love of his subjects. I regret that lord Lexington does not understand spanish ; for, I think, a translation will not do justice to this speech.


“ The states will open a new sitting immediately to pass into a law the king’s renunciation, and that which is to be made by the french princes. There is sufficient matter for reflection on such a subject ; but I have already indulged myself too far. I add, however, that the king hopes this will contribute to hasten the repose of Europe, particularly of France, and of the king, his grandfather, which he so ardently desires. See what sacrifices he makes for this object.”\*

The renunciation was accordingly ratified by the cortes, and a law passed, by which, in failure of Philip’s issue, the crown and dominions of Spain were entailed on the House of Savoy.

Philip profited by the present juncture to introduce a new order of succession, calculated to remove to a greater distance the transfer of the crown to a foreign family. He had already superseded the dispositions in the will of Charles

\* Noailles, t. 4, p. 386.

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1712—1714.



the second, by substituting the House of Orleans, in the order of succession, for the duke of Berri, preferably to the archduke, and the duke of Savoy. He now brought forward a species of salic law, entailing the crown on the males of his issue, according to the order of their birth, and excluding all females, while a single male, however distant, remained, under the condition that the prince called to the succession should be born and brought up in Spain. Should the crown eventually revert to a female, the same rule, with regard to a male succession, was to be rigorously re-established.\*

This change of a fundamental law, and of that very order of succession which had occasioned the union of Castile and Aragon, and to which Philip himself owed the crown, excited great discontent. Means were found to secure the approbation of the council of state; but in the council of Castile, the immediate organ of the royal will, it experienced the most strenuous opposition from the governor Ronquillo, and many other members. The first decision of the council was so adverse to the views of the king, that he ordered it to be burnt as a source of future doubts and divisions, and required each member to give his separate opinion signed and sealed. This expedient was calculated to pro-

\* Ortiz, t. 7, p. 259.



duce more docility. Those who had joined in a common opposition, were too prudent to encounter the royal displeasure singly, and no dissenting voice was found. The change thus sanctioned was embodied in a royal decree, and received the ratification of the cortes, as a law of the kingdom.\*

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As the british government had so readily receded from their demand for the sanction of the states general of France, the renunciations of Philip and the french princes were merely registered in a formal sitting of the parliament of Paris, and Louis revoked the letters patent, which he had before issued, reserving the rights of Philip to the french crown. The ceremony was performed in the presence of the duke of Shrewsbury and Mr. Prior, as the ministers of England, and the duke of Ossuna, the spanish ambassador.

The renunciation of Philip was confirmed by a solemn oath; but it is a remarkable fact, that either from negligence or connivance the dukes of Orleans and Berri gave only a mere declaration. The circumstance is recorded in a letter from the duke of Shrewsbury, and the answer of Bolingbroke presents a curious specimen of the reasoning by which his conduct was uniformly guided in this negotiation.

\* St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 64—69.

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“ We really took it for granted here, that the princes of the blood in France had sworn to their several renunciations of the crown of Spain, as king Philip did to his renunciation of the crown of France, and the words at the latter end of the renunciations of the dukes of Berri and Orleans confirmed this opinion. It is there said ‘ *Nous jurons solennellement sur les evangiles contenus au missel,*’ &c.

“ I confess, my lord, the insertion of these words in the acts, and the omission of the solemnity of the oath, carry something along with them which I do not like. The queen seemed to be of the same mind ; and, if I have nothing more particular in command to say to your grace upon this head, I believe it is *because things are thought so far advanced, that there is hardly time to overhale this proceeding* ; and in such case, perhaps it were better to take it for granted, that the princes have sworn, than enter into a contest which may give ground to other people now, and to the french hereafter, to cavil about the validity of these acts. Will your grace allow me to add my private sentiment ? If you find the want of this solemnity may be still supplied previously to the peace, or on the ratifying of it, the princes, I think, ought to swear, not as if at your grace’s instance, they were doing an act which they before neglected, but

as if they took the oath in a proper time and place."\*

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It is not among the least extraordinary circumstances of this iniquitous transaction, that, notwithstanding the most solemn engagements of Louis, not to appropriate any part of the spanish territories, he seized this opportunity to aim a new blow against the commercial prosperity of England, as well as against the spanish possessions of the new world. This was the grant of a royal patent to a merchant of the name of Crozat, empowering him to colonize a country which the french court had hitherto in vain attempted to occupy, with the view to form an establishment in the Gulf of Mexico, and circumscribe the british and spanish colonies on the west. This country, which under the new name of Louisiana was in reality dismembered from the spanish provinces of Florida and Mexico, was watered by the Mississippi, comprised a vast and indefinite extent of territory inland, afforded the means to appropriate the lucrative trade of Mexico, divided the northern colonies of Spain, and commanded the navigation between Vera Cruz and the Havannah. The subsequent transactions and wars in America proved but too well

Sept. 12.

\* Letter to the duke of Shrewsbury, Whitehall, March 24, 1712-13.—Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. 3, p. 509.

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the high importance and real motive of this acquisition.\*

Dec. 19.

The disastrous events of the campaign in the Netherlands, the pressure of the subsidies to Austria, and the dread that England would sign a separate treaty, overcame the reluctance of the dutch, and they, at length, confided their interests to the british cabinet, as their only resource. It was scarcely possible to have selected more improper agents. In the discussion which ensued, the french monarch gained essential advantages. He chicaned on the terms of the treaty of commerce, and instead of the barrier which had been established by the sound judgment of the preceding ministers, he obtained the restoration of the important fortresses of Lisle and Maubeuge, and excluded the towns of Nieuport, Lierre, and Halle, which were necessary to secure the country between the Scheldt and the sea. He would even have gained Tournay, had not the complaisance of Bolingbroke been checked by the more manly or more cautious sentiments of the treasurer.

The arrangement was accepted, though re-

\* Raynal's History of the East and West Indies, v. 7, p. 16.—Eng. transl.—State of Europe for 1712, p. 208.—There are some able observations on this subject in Postlethwayte's Great Britain's Commercial Interest.—The reader is also referred to the Maps of these regions, prior to the close of the 17th century.

luctantly, by the states, and became the prelude to their peace with France.\*

This event was speedily followed by the conclusion of a general peace between France and all the members of the grand alliance, except the emperor and empire. The terms regarding France, England, and Holland were nearly the same in substance as the preliminaries.

Philip was acknowledged king of Spain and the Indies. His plenipotentiaries, the duke of Ossuna, and the marquis of Monteleon, were at length admitted into the congress, and signed treaties with England and Savoy. To prevent the union of France and Spain, he renewed his renunciations, and declared the duke of Savoy successor to the crown, on the extinction of his

\* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. 2 and 3, passim.—Lamberti, t. 7, p. 319.—t. 8, p. 34, &c.


We find the British minister even furnishing arguments on this subject to the french court.

"The queen," he says, "can never do any thing which shall look like a direct restraint on her allies, from demanding what they judge necessary; but as long as they act the part which they now do, *she can very justly be passive and neuter as to their interests.* \* \* \* \* \* This is advantage enough for France, and such a one, fairly speaking, as a year ago they would have given more than Tournay to have been sure of. \* \* \*

"I think, in my own opinion, and I believe I speak the queen's upon this occasion, that it were better the french should, in the course of the treaty, declare, that whatever they intended to give the dutch, when the queen spoke from the throne, their conduct has been such, and the situation of ~~affairs~~ so altered, that the king is resolved to have Tournay restored to him."

Bolingbroke to Prior, Sept. 10, 1712.—Corresp. v. 3, p. 65.

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own issue. He acknowledged the title of queen Anne and the protestant succession in the House of Hanover, ceded Gibraltar and Minorca to England, granted to the british nation the *asiento*\*, for thirty years, and promised to restore their commerce to the same footing as during the reigns of the austrian sovereigns. He yielded the Netherlands, Naples, and Milan, with the isle of Sardinia, to the House of Austria, and Sicily to the duke of Savoy, with the title of king, to revert to the spanish crown in failure of his issue. Finally, he engaged never to sell or alienate to France, or any other nation, any town or province in America. This was the substance of the treaties with England and Savoy, to which they engaged to procure the accession of the other powers.

All parties employed their efforts to include the emperor in the pacification. But Charles rejected the proffered terms, refused to relinquish his rights to Spain, the Indies, and Sicily, and was little satisfied with the conditions on which he was to receive the Netherlands. He persisted in his resolution to prosecute the war, and prevailed on the empire to support another campaign. Unable, however, to maintain hostilities


\* *Asiento* signifies in spanish a treaty, and specifically means the treaty permitting the english to supply the spanish colonies with negroes.

in all quarters, he concluded a neutrality for Italy, consented to evacuate Catalonia and the islands in the Mediterranean, on the sole condition of a general amnesty for all his adherents, and concentrated his whole force on the Rhine, where he hoped to make a vigorous and decisive effort.

The result of the experiment proved the fallacy of his hopes, that when deserted by the allies, Austria could maintain a war alone against France. Villars, who was transferred to the command of the army on the Rhine, took Spire, Worms, and Keiserslautern, forced Landau to surrender after an obstinate siege, and crossing the Rhine captured Friburg, in the Brisgau. These reverses convinced the emperor that he had miscalculated his own strength and resources; and despairing of support from the maritime powers, he entered into a separate negotiation with France. Conferences were opened at Radstadt, between Eugene and Villars, the commanders of the respective armies, and speedily terminated in the signature of preliminaries, which became the foundation of a general treaty between France, the emperor, and empire, signed at Baden in Switzerland.

The treaties of Westphalia, Nimeguen, and Ryswick, were made the basis of the peace, as far as it regarded the House of Austria and the

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empire. Landau was ceded to France ; Friburg, Old Brisach, and Kehl, were restored to the emperor, France agreed to leave him in possession of Naples, the Milanese, and Sardinia, and of the Netherlands on the conditions settled by the last treaty of barrier. The electors of Bavaria and Cologne were reinstated ; the princes of Italy were to be maintained in the peaceable enjoyment of their actual possessions. As Charles persisted in his refusal to renounce his pretensions to Spain, no accommodation could be effected with Philip ; and the decision of the grand question relative to the spanish dominions, was still left to future wars or future negotiations.

Meanwhile, numerous difficulties had protracted the conclusion of a particular treaty between Philip and the dutch, notwithstanding he had announced his acquiescence in the terms arranged by the intervention of England ; for the demands of the republic, in regard to commercial privileges, and the payment of the arrears due from the austrian kings of Spain, produced a tedious discussion.

Nor were the terms arranged between England and Spain carried into effect without new quibbles and delays. From real or feigned reluctance to submit to the dismemberment of the monarchy, Philip withheld the instruments for the delivery of Sicily to the duke of Savoy, and employed the



interference of the inquisition to raise objections to the cession of the ecclesiastical rights in Gibraltar and Minorca. He chicaned also with regard to the commercial regulations, and positively rejected the demands made for the king of Portugal.

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To obviate these difficulties, the british ministry imitated the example of Louis in flattering the princess Orsini, and by her intervention the commercial treaty was at length arranged. "We are," said Bolingbroke, "I believe, obliged to the princess des Ursins for having this treaty sent us back in the manner it is; and I beg of you to let the spanish ministers perceive that the queen thinks so, and that you appear warmly for this lady's interest. As long as this queen of Spain lives, she will govern her husband; and as long as the princess lives, she will govern her; so that the advantage of flattering this old woman's pride, for her avarice we cannot flatter, must be solid and lasting."\*


Feb. 13,  
1713.

The failure of all attempts to secure to the princess her duchy of Limburg, deprived the british government of her further assistance.† Among the points which were still left in sus-

\* Bolingbroke to Strafford.—Corresp. v. 4, p. 473.—This letter deserves an attentive perusal, being an invective of extraordinary vehemence against the court of Madrid for its equivocations and delays in fulfilling its engagements.

† See the next Chapter.

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Nov. 7.

pence, was the arrangement with Portugal. As early as 1711, Philip had opened a secret negotiation with the court of Lisbon, but it was frustrated by the interference of England; and a desultory warfare continued in Estremadura with little advantage on either side. The suspension of arms between England and Spain was followed by a similar armistice with Portugal, which was likewise prolonged till the signature of the definitive treaty.


The british government affected considerable solicitude for the interests of Portugal; but cooled in proportion to the objections raised by the court of Madrid. At length, the king of Portugal voluntarily receded from the claims to which he was entitled by former treaties, and after the discussion had been prolonged till 1715, he relinquished his hopes of aggrandisement on the side of Spain, to acquire the long contested colony of Sacramento, at the junction of the Paraguay and Rio de la Plata. He likewise obtained from France the abandonment of her pretensions to certain districts on the borders of Brazil, and of a free navigation on the river of the Amazons.

Thus terminated a negotiation which proved the salvation of the House of Bourbon, and set the seal to the degradation of England. We cannot close a narrative which, at every step, has

awakened sentiments of shame, regret, and indignation, without adopting the words of bishop Fleetwood, in one of the most admirable compositions of which our language can boast.

“ Never did seven such years together pass over the head of any english monarch, nor cover it with so much honour. The crown and sceptre seemed to be the queen’s least ornaments. These other princes wore in common with her, and her great personal virtues were the same before and since. But such was the fame of her administration of affairs at home, such was the reputation of her wisdom and felicity in chusing ministers, and such was then esteemed their faithfulness and zeal, their diligence and great abilities in executing her commands; to such a height of military glory did her great general and her armies carry the british name abroad; such was the harmony and concord betwixt her and her allies, and such was the blessing of God upon all her counsels and undertakings, that I am as sure as history can make me, no prince of ours was ever yet so prosperous and successful, so loved, esteemed, and honoured by their subjects and their friends, nor near so formidable to their enemies. We were, as all the world imagined, then just entered on the ways that promised to lead us to such a peace as would have answered all the prayers of our religious queen, the care

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and vigilance of a most able ministry, the payments of a willing and obedient people, as well as all the glorious toils and hazards of the soldiery: when God, for our sins, permitted the spirit of discord to go forth, and by troubling sore the camp, the city and the country, (and oh! that it had altogether spared the places sacred to his worship), to spoil, for a time, this beautiful and pleasing prospect, and give in its stead I know not what.—*Our enemies will tell the rest with pleasure.*”\*

And the exultation of our enemies has sufficiently told the rest. It is needless to quote a less authority than that of Torci himself.

“ England quitting her allies, who were afterwards defeated at Denain, *had the glory* to contribute in restoring to Europe a happy and stable peace; *advantageous to France by the restoration of the principal places which she had lost during the war*, by the preservation of those which the king had offered three years before; *glorious by the maintenance of a prince of the royal family on the throne of Spain*; necessary from the fatal loss which the kingdom incurred

\* Fleetwood's Preface to his four Sermons.—It is scarcely necessary to apprise the reader that this preface was burnt, by order of the House of Commons. The interest which it excited may be judged from the circumstance that no less than 4,000 copies were circulated through the medium of the Spectator. See an excellent Letter of the Author to Bishop Burnett on this occasion, in Rapin, vol. 17, p. 537.

four years after that miserable negotiation, and two years after the peace, of the greatest king who had ever yet worn the crown."\*

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And in terminating his Memoirs, after expatiating on the restoration of Aire, Bethune, and St. Venant, and regretting the necessity of consenting to the rasure of Dunkirk for the sake of breaking the grand alliance, and the concessions made to the duke of Savoy, he triumphantly concludes; "But the monarchy of Spain, the object and the price of a bloody war during twelve years, was preserved in the royal house; and the right of the descendants of St. Louis acknowledged by so many powers and nations who had conspired to force king Philip to descend from the throne on which God had placed him."†

\* Torci, t. 2, p. 228.


† For the contents of this chapter have been consulted and compared, *Actes du Traité d'Utrecht*, Lamberti, t. 7 and 8. The different treaties in the general Collection of Treaties of Peace and Commerce—Public Papers and Documents in the Political State of Europe—Report of the Secret Committee of 1715, and other parliamentary proceedings of the period—Tindal, v. 18, whose dry pages contain a treasure of useful facts—Swift's Four Last Years of Queen Anne and Conduct of the Allies—Mem. de Villars, de Polignac, du Prince Eugene, écrits par lui même—Memoirs de Torci passim—St. Philippe, t. 3.—Mably Droit Public—Koch Abregé de l'Histoire des Traités de Paix—Paix d'Utrecht, t. 1.—Larrey, Histoire de Louis xiv.—Somerville's Queen Anne—Cunningham's History; and last, not least, the Collection of Bolingbroke's Correspondence, which brings to light many proofs of the weakness and infatuation of the british cabinet, which otherwise would not have been credible.

## CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1712—1714.

*Departure of the english troops from Catalonia—Afflicting case of the catalans—Their spirited resolution—Treaty for the evacuation of Catalonia concluded by the emperor—Negotiation between England and Spain relative to the catalan constitution and privileges—Their cause abandoned by England—They reject the offer of the castilian government, and prepare for an obstinate defence—Military operations in Catalonia—March of the french army—Siege, defence and storm of Barcelona—The catalan constitution abrogated—Surrender of Majorca—Letter from the emperor to general Stanhope on the fate of the catalans.*

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**BEFORE** the signature of the definitive treaty with Portugal, Philip had secured the possession of all the territories assigned to him at the peace of Utrecht by the recovery of Catalonia, Majorca and Iviza.

The campaign of 1712 in Catalonia was not more decisive than that of the preceding year; for the death of Vendome at Vimeros early in the spring, occasioned a sudden and temporary suspension of military operations.\*

Sept. 1712.

Immediately after the conclusion of the general armistice between France and England, the english troops withdrew from Barcelona, amidst

\* Vendome died of an indigestion, the consequence of his gluttonous intemperance, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.


the clamorous indignation of the people, whom the english government had excited to join the austrian standard. To prevent the effects of popular despair, the empress found it necessary to send four persons of distinction and influence, to facilitate their departure, and supply them with provisions. After encamping a short time on the very spot where Charles had first landed; and sympathising with the brave nation whom they were compelled to abandon, they embarked on board of the squadron commanded by sir John Jennings, and were conveyed to Minorca.\*

Notwithstanding the departure of the english troops, the campaign on the side of Philip was merely defensive, from an unwillingness to expose himself to the fortune of war, when he could more confidently rely on the successful issue of the pending negotiations. The whole year, therefore, presents no other incident worthy of notice, except an unsuccessful attempt of Staremburg against Gerona, in which the marquis of Brancas sustained a siege during the unusual length of nine months.

Towards the close of the season, the imperial general repaired to Barcelona, to ascertain the disposition of the catalans, and arrange a plan of future operations in conjunction with the states. He found this high-spirited people not depressed

\* Tindal, v. 18, p. 49.—St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 39.

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by the desertion of the english, and the probable result of the pending negotiations; but firm in their attachment to the sovereign whom they had chosen, and resolved to maintain their darling constitution though with the sacrifice of their fortunes and lives.

The emperor was deeply affected with this proof of their disinterested and affectionate attachment. But the reverses in the Netherlands, the forced defection of the dutch, the increasing complaisance of England towards the bourbon courts, left him no other resource than to concentrate his whole strength on the borders of the empire, and make a decisive effort for the preservation of his honour and safety. He did not, however, repay the affection of his faithful catalans with unavailing regret, and in treating for the evacuation of the principality, he struggled to save their constitution. In spite of all the disadvantages under which he laboured, he succeeded in obtaining a general armistice for all his partisans in Spain; he likewise extorted from England and France a solemn promise, which was inserted in the convention, to employ their intervention at the future peace for the preservation of the catalan privileges. In consequence of this agreement, which was guarantied by England, he was to withdraw his troops and give no future succour to the catalans; and on the com-



mencement of the armistice either Barcelona or Tarragona, at his own option, was to be yielded to Philip.\*

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When the moment of the execution arrived, and the empress took her departure on board the english squadron, the catalans, who regarded her as a pledge for the protection of Charles, burst into transports of indignation. Personal respect for a princess to whom they were sincerely attached, restrained their ardent passions, when the first division of the troops embarked; but it required all the address of Staremberg to prevent the effects of their despair on the departure of the last. During the interval before the return of the british squadron, he pacified them by offering to assist in the defence of their city, and when the fatal moment arrived, he amused the chiefs with proposals for a capitulation, while the troops quitted their posts, and silently drew towards the shore.


March 19.

May 15.

Though hopeless of external aid, and abandoned by all, the catalans disdained to bend to their adverse fortune. A small but desperate body made a rapid march to occupy Tarragona when the imperialists withdrew, and would probably have anticipated the royal troops, had not the

\* Convention for the evacuation of Catalonia.—Political State for 1712, p. 81.

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citizens themselves shut the gates and prevented their entrance ; yet though foiled in this attempt to secure one of the keys of their province, they had the satisfaction to be joined by the greater part of the garrison, and by 4,000 men, who deserted from the imperial ranks, with the connivance of Staremborg. In addition to this force, 6,000 regular troops remained in arms in the capital, besides the neighbouring garrison of Cardona, and the numerous parties of miquelets, who still occupied the fastnesses of this impracticable country. With this force they determined to make a decisive stand, relying on the promises of England and the secret encouragement of their beloved sovereign.

Philip, who was anxious to reduce his whole dominions under one form of government, and had already freed his crown from the restraints of the aragonesse constitution, was resolved to abrogate the privileges of Catalonia, which had often favoured internal revolt, and as often invited foreign invasion. He therefore carefully avoided the slightest engagement contrary to his view ; and in offering to the catalans a general amnesty and oblivion of past offences, he tendered to them the castilian constitution, in terms calculated to give it the appearance of a favour. The offer, however, was received with contempt

by a people who participated with the aragonese. in attachment to their native customs and laws, and in antipathy to those of Castile.

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In consequence of this contumacy, Philip next employed his efforts to deprive them of the countenance or support of England; and it is with regret that we again see our government displaying new instances of servility to the common enemy, again breaking their solemn engagements, and again sporting with the feelings and interests of their unfortunate allies.

When the queen excited the catalans to take up arms for the austrian prince, she pledged herself to maintain their privileges; and this promise had been confirmed in the recent treaty of evacuation: yet, Philip found means to influence a part of the british cabinet, and induced them to evade the performance of a promise twice pledged in the face of Europe. In the articles, therefore, which were submitted to the spanish court in virtue of the previous arrangements with France, lord Lexington made no mention of the catalan constitution, but confined his demand to a simple armistice. In the correspondence of Bolingbroke with the plenipotentiaries at Utrecht, these privileges are described as contrary to the interests of England, and the constitution of Castile, which was tendered as an alternative, as far more valuable to

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subjects who intended to live in due subjection to authority. The queen also, in her eagerness for peace, was easily induced by her secretary to adopt similar language and sentiments.

A temporary opposition, however, was made by the more independent members of administration, who evinced a wish to vindicate the national honour, and contended for the fulfilment of the royal promises. Hence arose discordant opinions, vacillating counsels, and contradictory orders and instructions. Hence we find lord Lexington at one time requiring only an armistice, at another the catalan privileges; conceding the point in one instance, and in another reviving the question by a fruitless protest.

Philip was too well assured of the real state and disposition of the british court, to be alarmed by this struggle of discordant sentiments. He treated the remonstrances as mere forms to preserve appearances, and save the honour of the queen: he coolly observed to the british ambassador, "Peace is no less necessary to you than to us; you will not break with us for a trifle," and on the protest of lord Lexington, Bedmar, the minister for foreign affairs, expressed his surprise, adding, "your excellency will recollect that you signed this article with your own hand; the king cannot enter into farther negotiation on a point already settled."

This dry and abrupt repulse, as Philip had doubtless expected, silenced all objections. The treaty with Spain was ratified at London without further hesitation or remonstrance, and dispatched to Utrecht, to be incorporated in the arrangements for the general peace. Nor was this the only proof of complaisance which he received from the bourbon partisans. The british government displayed the utmost eagerness for the reduction of Barcelona, employed the warmest remonstrances to reduce the regency to submission ; supported the complaints of the bourbon courts against the emperor, for encouraging them to persevere in their resistance against the royal authority, and pressed the conclusion of a peace with Portugal, in order to unite the whole force of the spanish monarchy, in the reduction of its rebellious subjects.

These circumstances induced Philip to make an earnest appeal for assistance, as well to England, as to France. Louis, disengaged from all the embarrassments of the war by the treaty of Rastadt, did not hesitate to comply with the request, and collected a force of 20,000 men, which under the command of Berwick was destined to cross the Pyrenees and assist in the reduction of Barcelona. The queen of England, also, not only approved this co-operation, but in spite of her solemn and repeated pledges,

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sent a squadron into the Mediterranean, under admiral Wishart, who was charged with instructions to straiten the supplies of Barcelona, and contribute to its surrender.

While, however, the crown and the ministry were thus degrading themselves, the heroic spirit and impending fate of the catalans awakened an honourable sympathy in the british nation. In spite of the superiority which the ministry had obtained in parliament, the House of Lords spoke the public sentiment, by addressing the queen “to continue her interposition that the catalans might enjoy their just and ancient privileges.” This incident, for a moment, overawed the ministry. The queen once more renewed, before her people and Europe, her solemn promise in favour of the catalans. A hint from Bolingbroke restricted admiral Wishart from fulfilling his orders with rigour; the clause was duly inserted in the instructions of lord Bingley; and after a delay of two months, we find Bolingbroke himself making a faint complaint to the spanish secretary, “that the catalan privileges were not yet granted, nor any reasonable terms offered, which, if they failed to accept, they must forfeit the queen’s compassion, and that of the whole world.”\*

\* Case of the Catalans considered in the Report of the Secret Committee.—Bolingbroke’s Correspondence, 1713—1714, *passim*.

In the mean time admiral Wishart arrived with his squadron at Cadiz. As the prevailing sentiment in England, and the revocation of his original orders, were not unknown at Madrid, he was received with a coldness amounting almost to studied disrespect. At the same time, however, to profit by the presence of his fleet, without incurring the obligation of his assistance, Philip again opened a negotiation with the catalans, and offered them a free pardon, and a general amnesty, if they would lay down their arms and submit to the castilian government.

Nothing, however, could vanquish the spirited resolution of this brave people. They rejected every condition, except the preservation of their constitution and laws, though they offered to purchase the concession by a considerable contribution.\* This alternative producing no effect, they determined, though abandoned by all, to relinquish their darling constitution only with their lives. They raised and disciplined new levies, repaired their fortifications, fitted out a squadron of light ships, amounting to fourteen sail, besides frigates and armed barks; and to supply the consumption of an extensive capital, as well as to furnish resources for their army, they seized the vessels of every nation, laden

\* Report of the Secret Committee.—Bolingbroke's Correspondence.

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with provisions, though they paid the full value of the cargoes. They even formally declared and waged a regular war by sea, against the french and spaniards. The military command was intrusted to Villaroel, who had received the rank of general in the austrian service, and he was ably seconded by native officers, both superior and subaltern, who had been formed in this long and dreadful conflict. To repress the timid as well as to awe the partisans or agents of Philip, a tribunal was constituted under the name of a council of conscience, and composed of the superior clergy, both regular and secular. It was empowered to judge without appeal, and by the summary rules of military law, all who failed in their duty to their country, or hinted the very name of capitulation; and a body of officers, popularly termed *Matamoros*, were appointed to carry its decrees into immediate execution.\* At the same time the citizens were encouraged by frequent supplies from the austrian parts of Sardinia and Naples, as well as from the neutral coasts of Italy. They conceived hopes from the pending disputes of the court of Madrid with Holland and Portugal; and they maintained an extensive correspondence with numbers of disaffected, in their own province, as well as in the bordering parts of Aragon

\* Desormeaux, t. 5, p. 317.



and Valencia, to whom the slightest reverse of the royal arms, would have been a signal for immediate insurrection.

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Meanwhile the storm gathered heavily and fearfully around them. The duke of Popoli, with the main army, as well as strong detachments under the marquis of Tuy and the count of Montemar, gradually dispersed the desultory hordes which infested the mountainous districts, and straitened Barcelona by land, while a spanish squadron blockaded it by sea. The french troops also had already begun their march to co-operate with those of Philip, in reducing his contumacious subjects.

On the seventh of May, a bombardment commenced; but the assailants were driven from their works by a vigorous sally, and were only saved from defeat by the arrival of a french detachment. This repulse again reduced the siege to a blockade, till the arrival of marshal Berwick, with the french army of 20,000 men. The allied force now united under his command, amounted to 35,000 men before the place; 8,000 were stationed at Girona, to preserve the communication with France; a corps of cavalry scoured the country to disperse the flying parties of insurgents, and 8,000 were scattered over the districts between Barcelona and the Ebro.

1714.

To this imposing force, the catalan chiefs

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could only oppose 16,000 regimented troops, besides the armed citizens; but the imminent and inevitable danger only roused that chivalrous spirit by which the spanish people have been ever distinguished. Hopeless of relief, they disdained submission, and looked forward to no other alternative than the repulse of the royalists, or utter destruction. Every expedient which art could devise was employed to give effect to their efforts. The fortifications both of Montjuich and the town were strengthened; barricades formed in the streets; the walls of the houses pierced to render every dwelling a citadel, and no precaution omitted for defence while an inch of ground remained to defend. The aged, sickly, and timid, were removed to the protection of their friends and confederates, the islanders of Majorca; priests, monks, and even women, flew to arms; the bishop, and the clergy, excited the popular enthusiasm, both by exhortations and example; and every motive of religion and patriotism, as well as the powerful influence of the social passions, was called into action. Finally, they deposited the promise of the queen of England to maintain their laws and constitution, on the high altar of the cathedral, as a solemn appeal to heaven against that desertion of which they were destined to become the victims.


The unexpected firmness and menacing aspect of the catalans convinced Philip that the impending contest would require all the support which he could draw from foreign aid. He, therefore, changed his conduct towards the british admiral, and by favours and presents, not only induced him to concur in straitening the supplies of Barcelona, but obtained from him a threatening remonstrance to the regency, for presuming to plunder british ships, and ill treat the sailors. To this menace, the catalan chiefs pleaded the excuse of necessity, and promised redress; but, at the same time, they made a pathetic appeal to british humanity, and requested his mediation for a suspension of arms. The appeal was fruitless: for to enable the spaniards to maintain the blockade with undiminished forces, the admiral detached three of his own ships to convoy the flotilla returning from America.\*

At this crisis, the long expected death of Anne, and the accession of George the first, inspired the besieged with new hopes, and as the unfortunate are elated by the faintest gleam of relief, they flattered themselves that the change would produce a speedy and effectual interposition in their favour. Nor, indeed, was their confidence wholly unfounded. The very first measure of the new government was an urgent

Aug. 1,  
1714.

\* Case of the Catalans, as before.

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application to France in their behalf, declaring them under the protection of the british crown, and remonstrating against the march of the french troops and the investment of Barcelona, after the solemn promise given by the french monarch to concur with England in obtaining the preservation of the catalan constitution.

These instances were, however, too late to be availing. Louis replied, " he had already employed his good offices ; their obstinacy alone was the cause of their misfortune, and a regard for his own honour would not permit him to recal his troops." To preclude farther remonstrance, he hurried reinforcements to the army, and ordered the commander to redouble his efforts for the reduction of Barcelona.

Embarrassed with factions in his new kingdom, and restrained by the fear of a jacobite insurrection, George could not enforce his instances by renewing hostilities. All appeals to the honour of Louis and the humanity of Philip proving ineffectual, he gave the only support to the catalans, which his circumstances would permit, by enjoining admiral Wishart not to molest the besieged, nor to hinder any relief which might be brought by sea.\*

As the emperor had now concluded a peace, and repeated appeals, not only to the christian

\* Tindal, v. 18, p. 303.—Also Case of the Catalans.

powers, but even to the turks, had produced no effect, the catalans were left to their own courage, exertions, and resources.

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On the 12th of July, the trenches were formally opened against the city, and, under the skilful direction of french engineers, advanced regularly towards the ramparts. In spite of the most desperate sallies, the batteries began to play on the 25th, and five days afterwards, a lodgment was made on the covert way. On the 12th of August, breaches were effected in two of the bastions, but it required a struggle of three days before the assailants could gain a footing on the rampart.

Here generally ends the most desperate resistance of a fortified town; though, in this instance, it was scarcely more than the commencement of the conflict. While preparations were arranging for three assaults at the same moment, Berwick compassionately made an effort to save the city from the horrors of a storm, and deferred the signal for a combat which was likely to prove no less destructive to his own troops than to the besieged. All his benevolent offers serving only to rouse new transports of enthusiasm, the fatal signal was at length given on the morning of the 11th of September.\*

A contemporary author,† who wrote under

\* Memoires de Berwick, t. 2, p. 174, et seq. † St. Philippe.

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the horrible impression of the moment, has traced a glowing picture of this deplorable event.

Fifty battalions of grenadiers commenced the dreadful work, and were supported by forty others. The french attacked the eastern bastion, the spaniards that of St. Clara and the new gate. The resistance was obstinate even to ferocity. Cannon loaded with grape made the most dreadful carnage in the breaches. Without being able to advance a single step, the assailants perished by hundreds. Fresh troops incessantly arriving, at length overpowered the weaker numbers of the besieged. The french and spanish columns mounted the breaches at the same instant, and the french pushed forward into the town. But here the conflict really commenced. Every street was intersected with barricades; every inch of ground was purchased with the sacrifice of lives. Unprovided with means to force the barricades, or fill up the ditches, the assailants were swept away by an incessant fire from every house. At length, all obstructions were overcome by torrents of blood. In the heat of the combat, the victors spared none; the catalans, lavish of life, demanded no quarter. When they were driven into the great square, the assailants deemed the conflict at an end, and dispersed for pillage. But the insurgents, profiting by the moment, returned to the charge; the assailants were driven

back to the breach, and would have been again precipitated into the ditch, had they not been rallied by the bravery and exertions of their officers. Again the combat raged with aggravated fury, for the spanish column which had penetrated by the other breach was driven back as the french retreated.


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Numbers and bravery at length vanquished all resistance. The spaniards turned their own cannon against them, and additional artillery was brought up to the breach. Yet though thrown into disorder, they did not cease to combat. The assailants, galled with a continual and terrible fire, by a desperate effort forced the bastion of St. Peter, where the besieged made their principal stand, and turned its artillery against them. In this crisis, the chiefs led them to a new charge, but were repulsed, and Villaroel desperately wounded. Though discouraged by the misfortune of the commander, the besieged still maintained the struggle for twelve hours, in every quarter of the town, and there was scarcely an inhabitant of any age, sex, or condition, who did not share in the defence. The history of this century does not furnish an example of a siege so long and bloody.

The women at length retired into the convents; the populace, vanquished and straitened

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on every side, and unable to defend themselves, did not demand quarter, and the french massacred all without distinction. At this moment some individuals raised a white standard, and Berwick seized the opportunity to suspend the carnage, ordering the troops to maintain their posts, till he had heard the proposals of surrender. But a sudden cry of "kill and burn" bursting from the ranks, revived the fury of the troops, the streets were again deluged with blood, and the authority of Berwick himself scarcely sufficed to arrest the disorder. Night arrived, and with it new horrors; for in the short interval of suspence the inhabitants resumed their arms, and again poured a destructive fire from the houses.

Deputies at length advanced to the breach to parley with marshal Berwick, but required a general pardon and the restoration of their privileges. The marshal contemptuously rejected the demand, and threatened to give no quarter if they did not surrender before morning. His answer inflamed the spirit of the insurgents; and the combat raged with redoubled fury, a storm of fire pouring upon the assailants from the houses which by order of the marshal had been respited from destruction.

This night was one of the most horrible that imagination can form. The marshal ordered



the dead and wounded to be removed, kept the troops under arms, and prepared to reduce the town to ashes. Day broke, and notwithstanding the obstinacy of the insurgents, he granted a delay of six hours. This concession producing no effect, the houses were set on fire. Apprised of their danger by the burst of the flames, the insurgents once more hoisted a flag of truce. The fire was extinguished, the deputies of the magistracy yielded the town without condition ; and the offers of Berwick procured the immediate surrender of Montjuich and Cardona.

The lives and property of the inhabitants were spared ; but twenty of the chiefs, among whom were Villaroel, Armengol, the marquis de Peral, and Nebot, were consigned to perpetual imprisonment, in the castle of Alicante, and the bishop of Albaracin with two hundred ecclesiastics banished to Italy. Of the rest, the inferior officers were dismissed on taking the oath of allegiance. The standards of the town were publicly burnt, the privileges of the province annulled, and a new government established according to the constitution of Castile. The prince of Tzerclaes was nominated captain general of the province, and the marquis of Leide governor of Barcelona.

Thus ended a conflict which recalls to recollection the fate of the ancient Numantia and

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Saguntum,\* and in recent times finds a parallel in the immortal defence of Saragossa. The royalists purchased their victory with the loss of no less than 6,000 men in the siege, and 4,000 in the assault, and the besieged were equally sufferers. This ferocious resistance induced some counsellors of Philip to recommend the rasure of the place, and the erection of a pyramid in commemoration of the rebellion; but too prudent as well as too humane to destroy one of the most valuable cities of his dominions for the sake of personal resentment, he faithfully fulfilled the conditions which Berwick promised to the inhabitants.†

Majorca alone had not yet acknowledged the authority of Philip, but the dreadful fate of Barcelona was not sufficient to reduce these hardy islanders. At length, the arrival of 10,000 french and spanish troops, convinced them that farther resistance was fruitless; after a short deliberation, they accepted the offer of a general pardon, and of more favourable conditions than had been granted to the catalans, and pledged their obedience to Philip.

The noble struggle and melancholy fate of

\* The modern Murviedro, which has been recently illustrated by a gallant defence against the french arms.


† In addition to the animated description of St. Philippe, the reader is referred to the more brief account of Berwick, which does equal justice to the desperate defence of Barcelona.

the catalans, excited sympathy even in the breasts of those who were adverse to their cause. The british monarch and nation naturally witnessed their downfall with deep regret; but no heart more sincerely bled than that of the emperor, who considered himself as the innocent and unfortunate cause of their ruin. Notwithstanding the desertion of England, he had resumed his instances in their favour at the conferences of Rastadt, and the memoirs of Villars bear an honourable testimony to his zeal and firmness in their behalf, and the sorrow and reluctance with which he abandoned them to their fate. A letter written to general Stanhope, who had equally witnessed their fidelity and sufferings in his cause, will prove that the feelings of the monarch were lost in those of the man.

After expressing his grateful affection for Mr. Stanhope, and those who had acted in his cause, and his satisfaction at the recent change of government in England, he continues, “Convinced as I am of your goodness of heart, I am persuaded that you and your friends will compassionate the fidelity, constancy, and misfortune of my poor catalans, whose attachment to me is without example. Neither calamities, nor perils, nor persuasion, have been able to weaken their generous fidelity. All this pierces my heart. I leave you to judge, you who can best judge,

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whether it is in my power to succour them without a naval force ; on the contrary, I should only aggravate their ruin. I place my reliance on you and your friends, and doubt not but you will reflect on the dreadful state to which they have been reduced by the evil minded of your countrymen, contrary to the most solemn and repeated promises.”\*

\* The letter from which this abstract is taken, written in the french language in the hand of the emperor himself, is preserved in the Harrington Papers.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

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*The princess Orsini obstructs the conclusion of peace, to extort the cession of her sovereignty in the Netherlands—Death of Maria Louisa, queen of Spain—Despondency of Philip, and influence of the princess—Administration and financial regulations of Orri—Fruitless attempt to reform the abuses of the church—Disputes and reconciliation of the princess with the court of Versailles—Her negotiations and intrigues for the re-marriage of Philip—Choice of Elisabeth Farnese, princess of Parma—Arrival of the new queen in Spain—Disgrace and banishment of the princess—Remarks on this singular event—Her subsequent adventures—Changes in the spanish administration.*

AS Louis had concluded the peace from apprehensions lest a change in the british government should occasion the renewal of the war, he was no less sincere in desiring to terminate the complicated business of the negotiation, by an arrangement between Spain, Holland, and Portugal, which had been suspended from various causes. He therefore called on Philip to ratify the conditions concluded in his behalf, through the intervention of England. But he found his grandson less grateful to the hand which had raised him to the throne, than sensible of the sacrifices extorted from him, and indignant at the insults which he had experienced from the dutch

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and the emperor. Various circumstances also contributed to increase his reluctance.

Among others, the greatest obstacle was derived from the opposition of the princess Orsini. The sovereignty which had been promised to her, rather as the price of future, than as the reward of past services, however inconsiderable it was at first represented, was no less important a territory than the duchy of Limburg. In addition to the absolute promise of Louis to extort the consent of the emperor, her useful agency had been repaid with a promise equally solemn from England, and the intended transfer was accordingly secured with every requisite formality.

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Before the cession of the Netherlands, a grant of the duchy of Limburg, with such additional territories as should produce an annual revenue of 30,000 crowns, was passed by a legal act, and introduced in the convention concluded between Spain and England, by the agency of lord Lexington. The same clause, by the express injunction of the british ministry, was afterwards inserted in the treaty of Utrecht ; and the queen pledged her royal word never to permit the transfer of the Netherlands, till the princess was quietly established and acknowledged in her sovereignty.\* Both before and after the con-

July 13.

\* Treaty between Great Britain and Spain.—See Collect. Treaties, v. 3, p. 492.

clusion of the treaty, members of the british cabinet continued to lavish on the princess their professions of service, and repeatedly pledged their own personal credit\* as well as the word of their royal mistress, for the fulfilment of this condition.

Nothing appeared wanting to crown her hopes, but the acquiescence of the dutch, and the consent of the emperor. But they were bound by no personal obligations to conciliate her favour; and, therefore, the states refused their guaranty, and the emperor opposed the cession of so valuable a territory in the heart of a distant province, to a dependant of France and Spain. All arguments failing to overcome their objections, the zeal of the british court gradually cooled; and finally, Louis himself, in the conferences at Rastadt, after a slight affectation of reluctance, gave up a point of such inferior importance, compared with the restoration of a general peace.†

Stung with disappointment, the princess exerted her powerful influence to protract the negotiation with Holland; and she unfortunately found both Philip and the queen too sensible of

\* See in the Correspondence of Bolingbroke, v. 3 and 4, numerous letters from him to the princess, written in a style of the most extravagant adulation.

† Memoires de Villars, t. 2, p. 316.

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1714. affront to themselves.

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In the midst of the suspense derived from this cause, the queen of Spain fell a victim to the fatal and lingering disorder which had long afflicted her. She died in the twenty-sixth year of her age, leaving two sons, Louis and Ferdinand; regretted by the spaniards, by whom she was beloved and respected; deeply lamented by her husband, who, to her lively temper and amiable disposition, owed the comforts of domestic life and tranquillity of mind, and to her exertions and magnanimity was scarcely less indebted for the preservation of his throne.

The interregnum, for so it may be truly called, between the death of one queen and the arrival of a second, became the reign of the princess Orsini.

In the first moments of despondency, Philip abandoned the reins of government to the cardinal del Giudice, a neapolitan prelate, recently raised to the important post of grand inquisitor, and justly meriting his confidence, by integrity, candour, and zeal for the catholic faith. Unable to support the view of a palace which brought his beloved consort to his recollection, he retired to the hotel of the duke of Medina Celi at Madrid, with no other companion than the





princess, who, by her post of governess to the prince of Asturias, was entitled to share the royal residence. As the hotel was too small to contain the numerous attendants of the court, the princess established herself in an adjacent convent; and the capuchins to whom it belonged, were transferred to another monastery. By her order, the party walls which separated the convent from the hotel were demolished, and an open gallery, which formed a communication between the two buildings, was closed, to enable her to pay her visits to the royal widower, at all seasons without restraint, and without observation.\*

In this state of seclusion, a woman of such refined talents had full opportunity to establish her sway over the mind of the king, and to appropriate the royal authority. At her suggestion, the powers granted to the cardinal del Giudice were recalled within the short interval of three days; and the principal direction of affairs transferred to Orri, who, in the late political revolutions, had been again summoned to Spain.

The primary object of the princess and her dependent, was to introduce a new system of administration, and exclude from all share in the government the native spaniards, on whose attachment they could not depend. Grimaldo,

\* Duclos, t. 1, p. 73.

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who, in his post of secretary of state, possessed too a degree of influence, was dismissed from those offices which might render him a dangerous opponent, and confined to the departments of war and the Indies. The other secretary, Mejorada, was supplanted by don Manuel Vadello : don Francisco Ronquillo was removed from the government of the council of Castile, which was divided among five different persons. Four presidents were also appointed to the council of finance, and three to that of the Indies. Similar changes were made in the other branches of the administration ; and regulations were introduced which were calculated to rouse the proverbial torpor of the spaniards, and give effect to the measures of the government. Lastly, the important department of the finances was divided between Orri and the count of Bergueik.

Orri was, however, soon left in the uncontrolled possession of ministerial authority. Bergueik, who was no less untractable and overbearing than Orri, was offended with his airs of superiority, and, like preceding ministers, entered into cabals against the princess ; like them, too, disappointed in the attempt, he resigned in disgust, and returned to Flanders.

In justice to the memory of Orri, we ought to observe, that many of the changes which he introduced into the spanish system of adminis-

tration, were directed by sound views and attended with happy effects. Without giving full credit to the extravagant praises of his partisans, we ought to vindicate him from the equally exaggerated accusations of his enemies. At this distant period, it is difficult to trace the whole extent of his plans ; but a brief sketch of his principal improvements will be a sufficient proof of his merits.

Formed in the french school, he naturally copied the french system in the plan of political œconomy which he originally laid down for Spain. He was, however, equally thwarted by the french ambassadors, and by the spaniards ; and during his first residence in Spain, appears to have confined his efforts to the introduction of temporary expedients, calculated to meet the current expences, to improvements in the œconomy of the army, and to such partial changes in the public offices, as time and circumstances would permit.

He in particular formed a plan for the resumption of the royal fiefs in the two Castiles, which had been pledged or alienated during the troubles of the monarchy. This measure had been repeatedly recommended by different kings of Spain, in their testamentary directions to their successors ; but no hand was bold enough to make the attempt. Orri reunited all these fiefs

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without distinction ; and to reconcile the rules of justice with the royal prerogative, he appointed a junta, authorised to judge and decide the claims of those individuals who could produce proper titles. With his recal in 1704, his plans were suddenly suspended ; and though his system was kept in vigour by the superintendence of Amelot ; yet in the subsequent changes and troubles the affairs of Spain relapsed into the same disorder from which he had endeavoured to rescue them.

Returning at the auspicious period of the conclusion of peace, and raised to power by the uncontrolled ascendancy of his patroness, he resumed his extensive designs. To obviate the endless vexations and abuses derived from a host of farmers, collectors, guards, and officers, not only in the same department of finance, but even in the same province and town, a royal decree was issued on the 26th December 1713, which reduced this complicated and jarring machinery to one simple and effective system. The whole internal revenues were divided into twenty-one provinces, each administered according to the same rules, and farmed at least by a single proprietor.\* Within a month the same mode of simplification was introduced into the still more confused department of the customs, in which

\* In the first instance, the number of proprietors amounted only to eleven, because one proprietor took several farms.

the competition of different officers and guards belonging to different branches in the same ports, had given rise to every species of fraud and abuse, to the ruin of the native fabrics and trade, and the detriment of the royal revenue. This department was at first divided into seventeen farms, like the internal taxes, but ultimately placed under the sole administration of the council of finances. So perfectly were the measures matured for the adoption of the new system, that it took effect without apparent difficulty or delay. The publication of these two decrees may be considered as a new era in the political history of Spain, as the foundation of that extensive system which the spanish court has since invariably laboured to bring to perfection.\*

In his zeal for reformation, Orri extended his views to reduce the power and privileges, and restrain the abuses, of the church; in particular, to diminish the formidable authority of the inquisition. In this design he was supported by the confessor Robinet, and assisted by Don Melchior Macanaz, whose vigorous understanding and energy of character had raised him from the office of a petty judge in the kingdom of Aragon to that of attorney general of Castile, and who had

\* Uztariz, Theory and Practice of Commerce, v. 1, p. 263. v. 2, p. 360. St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 82—83. Noailles, t. 2, § and 4, passim.

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already proved his hostility to the immunities of the clergy. At the instigation of Orri and the princess, he presented a memorial to the king, proving that the abuses of the church had injured the rights of the crown ; that the privilege of sanctuary had rendered the sacred places an asylum for crimes ; that the civil immunities of the ecclesiastical body were equally detrimental to the royal authority and the public revenue, and that the tribunal of the papal nuntio had been gradually erected into an intolerable despotism.

The memorial made a deep impression on the mind of Philip, and was referred, in the regular course of business, to the examination of the council of Castile. This circumstance, whether occasioned by accident or necessity, was dangerous to a plan so ill calculated for the meridian of Spain, as well as to its authors. The memorial was instantly discovered by the watchful eyes of the inquisition, and solemnly denounced as heretical, and subversive of the true faith. In this sentence two french jurists, who had been consulted, were involved ; but from respect to the king, the name of Macanaz was omitted. The decree, after being dispatched to Paris\* for the sanction of the grand inquisitor, the cardinal del Giudice, was posted in every church and

\* In the interval since his removal from the direction of public affairs, del Giudice had been dispatched on a public mission to Paris.

public place in the kingdom, and even affixed to the walls of the royal palace.

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The reformers collected their whole strength to parry this dangerous and unexpected blow. They represented the publication of the inquisitorial sentence as a glaring insult against the crown; and so highly exasperated the king, that he demanded its revocation, and caused it to be removed from the churches. He even conceived the design of suspending the holy tribunal, nominated Robinet, and the brother of Macanaz, a dominican friar, as temporary inquisitors, and enjoined del Giudice to resign his office. He also recalled the cardinal from Paris, and on his arrival at the frontier, dispatched an order forbidding him to enter Spain.\*

The inquisition, however, confiding in its long established authority, defied even the mandates of the sovereign, and found means to frustrate the designs of the ministry. The removal of del Giudice was prevented by the refusal of the pope to accept his resignation, and the deputy inquisitors declined entering on their office. Attacks were made on the conscience of the scrupulous monarch; and a council of divines which he was induced to consult, gave their opinion in favour of the holy office, and censured the offensive memorial. This decision was confirmed

\* St. Philippe.

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by the council of Castile, which, though it faintly approved some particulars, censured the whole plan as too violent, and contrary to the principles of the catholic faith. Philip therefore bent before the highest civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and declined adopting the bold advice of his ministers, though he continued to protect Macanaz from the vengeance of the dreadful tribunal, which a zeal for the royal service had urged him to provoke.\*

These different reforms, and particularly the attempt to restrain the power of the church, excited general odium against their authors. But the influence of the princess was too deeply rooted, to be shaken by popular discontent, or even by the influence of the church, had she not offended the court of Versailles by her opposition to the peace, and still farther, had she not committed one of those errors from which the most sagacious, prudent, and circumspect, are not always exempt.

Louis, who was pressing the conclusion of a general accommodation, was irritated by her opposition, and ordered Berwick, when nominated to the command in Catalonia, to repair to Madrid, under the pretence of condoling with Philip on the death of the queen, but in reality to extort his consent to a peace. The princess,

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 120—150.





however, discovering the object of the journey, not only possessed sufficient influence to prevent it, but persuaded Philip to accompany his refusal with the remark, that the presence of Berwick with an army before Barcelona would be more advantageous to his service than a compliment of condolence. Irritated by this ungracious expression, Louis replied, that neither troops nor ships should be sent to Barcelona, until the peace was signed with Holland. But the princess was so determined to secure the cession of her promised territory in the Netherlands, that she over-ruled the impatience of Philip to reduce the catalans, persuaded him to make no reply to the notification, and dispatched Orri into Catalonia, to ascertain whether the resources of Spain were sufficient to complete the reduction without foreign aid. Discovering, at length, that the assistance of France was indispensable, she made new applications at the court of Versailles, though without evincing the slightest inclination to desist from her purpose.

Meanwhile, the capital again witnessed the revival of indecorous altercations between the princess and the french ambassador, the marquis of Brancas. The princess excluded the ambassador from all interference at court; he, in return, accused her of intercepting his dispatches, and inveighed against her baneful influence.

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He charged her with thwarting the operations of Berwick, to the disgrace of the french arms, and the ruin of Spain, and declared that she would suffer the french troops, detached into that country, to perish with famine.

These representations still more inflamed the resentment of Louis. He repeated his resolution to send no farther succour to the assistance of Philip, and even to suspend the march of his troops destined to act against Barcelona. He added in a tone of offended dignity, " I will make a separate peace with Holland and the emperor, and leave Spain to defend herself against her enemies. I am resolved no longer to plunge myself in new misfortunes for the sake of the princess Orsini, but to give my subjects that repose which they so much need." To excite the national odium against the princess, Brancas was permitted to circulate this declaration in the name of his sovereign.

The princess now caught the alarm, and called forth all her address to pacify the french monarch, through the agency of madame de Maintenon. In vain she protested that her pretensions had not obstructed the peace; in vain she revived the memory of her past services; in vain she urged Philip to demand the recal of Brancas. No assistance was sent against Barcelona, and the catalans were enabled to augment

their means of resistance. At length, the firmness of the french court, and the dread of its resentment, compelled her to submit. The cardinal del Giudice was dispatched to Paris, and restored the good correspondence between the two courts; and Philip transmitted to his plenipotentiaries at Utrecht full powers to conclude the peace.

This timely submission allayed the gathering storm. Louis appeared satisfied with her apologies; and the troops which had evacuated Sardinia, were ordered to join the force destined to act against Barcelona. But at the moment of this apparent calm, the aspiring views and overweening confidence of the princess involved her in a new disgrace as sudden as it was unexpected.

In consequence of the known complexion and character of Philip, the deceased queen was scarcely interred, before a design was formed to provide him with a new consort. As before, it was deemed necessary to select a princess, who, with the qualities proper to sway his mind, did not possess talents or spirit to rule without controul; and Louis, who intended to direct the choice, proposed a princess of Portugal or Bavaria, or a daughter of the prince of Condé.

But the future destiny of Spain, and the choice of a queen, who, under the name of Philip, was to pacify or trouble Europe, was not left to the

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option of the french monarch ; for the princess, the sole arbitress of the will of Philip, was too sagacious, as well as too ambitious, to neglect a crisis which was to consolidate her power, and decide her future fate.

The voice of scandal even accused her of consoling the royal widower for the loss of his Louisa ; but with stronger appearance of truth, reports were spread that she aspired to share his bed and throne. With any other sovereign, such a project, at her advanced age, would have appeared too wild to justify even suspicion, but with a man, whom Alberoni coarsely characterised by the phrase “ he needs only a wife and a prayer-book,”\* and with the arts, the character, and aspiring temper of the woman, it does not appear entirely destitute of probability. Age had not totally robbed her of her personal charms, and the resources of art were lavished to supply the deficiency. With a person which had not yet lost its original elegance, with winning manners, fascinating address, and undiminished vivacity, she had acquired that imposing decision of character which is derived from long habits of rule ; she possessed likewise the strongest claims to the respect and esteem of the monarch, from her faithful services, her solicitude to lighten the burthens of government, and her tender care of

\* Duclos, t. 2, p. 64.

the royal children. Lastly, the habits of constant and familiar intercourse, and the consolation which her society had administered, when his mind was subdued by sorrow, had given birth to a sentiment which may almost be termed affection. It is not improbable that a consciousness of these advantages tempted the ambition of a woman, whose passions were all lost in her love of rule; who, with the power and ostentation, was capable of aspiring to the title and station of a queen.

Such a project is necessarily involved in impenetrable mystery; but if we may attach credit to the assertion of Alberoni and Elizabeth Farnese, and even the avowal of Philip himself, the design was certainly formed, and perhaps frustrated only by a sense of shame which the well-timed sarcasms of the confessor excited in the mind of Philip.\*

But leaving these remarks to the judgment of those who are fond of penetrating into the details of private history, it is at least certain that she was interested to select a queen as zealously devoted to her as the last, and that she was too artful to contribute to the elevation of any

\* *Le Roi*," says Duclos, "aimant à s'entretenir des nouvelles de France avec son confesseur, lui demanda un jour ce qui se disoit de nouveau à Paris: Sire, répondit Robinet, *on y dit que V. M. va épouser Madame des Ursins. Oh! pour cela, non, dit le Roi sèchement, et passa.*"—*Mem. Secrets*, t. 1, p. 74.

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princess likely to be swayed by the influence of a foreign court. She, therefore, adroitly thwarted the recommendations of the king of France ; while she turned her attention to discover a princess of a petty court, who, to an amiable disposition, and moderate talents, united graces of person, whom she might govern by the ties of gratitude and respect. In this search, a casual suggestion of Alberoni, the subtle agent of the duke of Parma, induced her to fix her choice on a princess of the House of Farnese.\*

Being engaged in conversation with Alberoni, while the funeral procession of the late queen was passing, she remarked, " We must provide a new wife for the king," and added the names of different princesses. The wily italian raised objections to each; and penetrating her design, observed, " You must find one quiet and docile, and not likely to interfere in state affairs." The princess asking, " Where shall we discover such a person ?" He rapidly recapitulated the princely families of Europe ; and then, as if by accident recollecting himself, carelessly mentioned Eliza-

\* The author of the life of Alberoni, published at the Hague in 1722, introduces a letter from Alberoni to a friend, in which he asserts that the marriage was arranged without the knowledge or consent of the princess Orsini; but this letter is a palpable forgery, as is proved from the authentic testimony of Poggiali, author of the *Memorie Istoriche de Piacenza*, and from the declaration of Alberoni himself, in the Apology written after his disgrace.

beth Farnese, daughter of Edward, deceased duke of Parma, adding, with the same tone of simplicity and indifference, "She is a good girl, plump, healthy, and well fed, brought up in the petty court of her uncle, duke Francis, and accustomed to hear of nothing but needle-work and embroidery."\* He dexterously adverted also to her reversionary claims on the duchies of Parma and Tuscany, which might afford the means of regaining the spanish power in Italy.

The princess made no direct reply to the artful suggestion, but her confidence in Alberoni secretly influenced the choice. After a lapse of three months, in which the impatience of Philip daily increased, she yielded to his wishes, and proposed to obtain the acquiescence of Louis in a new marriage, though without alluding to the princess of Parma. She accordingly sent for her nephew the count of Chalais, an officer of the spanish guards, then engaged before Barcelona, to fulfil this commission. He was presented by the princess to Philip; but as the timid monarch

\* We quote the expressive language of Poggiali. He says he drew the information from a person of credit, to whom it was communicated by Alberoni himself.

"Questo pur freddamente e come a mezza voce, la nominò, aggiugnendo per altro, ch'ella era una buona Lombarda, impastata da buttero e formaggio Picentino, elevata alla casalinga, nella picciola Corte del Duca Francesco, suo zio e patrigno, ed aveva di non sentirsi di altro parlare che di mertelli, ricami e tele."—Poggiali *Memorie Storiche di Biacenza*, p. 279.

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was embarrassed, and hesitated to communicate his desire, the favourite assumed the conversation. "His majesty," she said, "is desirous to marry again, and orders you to repair to Paris, and obtain the consent and recommendation of the king of France." By this remark the embarrassment of Philip was dissipated, he gave the requisite authority for the important mission, and Chalais took his departure.

At this very moment, or immediately afterwards, she succeeded in persuading Philip to demand the princess of Parma; and urged the necessity of secrecy to prevent the emperor from obstructing a match calculated to give Spain a footing in Italy. A counter order was instantly dispatched to Chalais; but the courier passing him on the road, reached Paris before him. The sudden appearance of Chalais did not fail to excite the curiosity of the french cabinet. Although he alleged the pretence of private business, they were too accurately apprised of his movements to be easily deceived; and after refusing to disclose the object of his journey to Torci, he obeyed the positive commands of the king himself, and imparted it in a private audience.

Meanwhile the princess had gained the private dispensation of the pope, and through the agency of Alberoni, secured the consent of the court of Parma. She now thought proper to make a



formal communication to Louis, and the requisite orders were accordingly dispatched to Chalais. Louis, however surprised at the preceding communication, was still more displeased and astonished at the secrecy and haste with which this match had been concluded ; and indignantly replied, “ Well then, since he must marry, let him marry.”\* Chalais returning with this assent, however ungracious, was made a grandee of Spain ; and measures were adopted to accelerate an union to which the princess fondly looked, as the seal of her authority.

In the midst of her exultation, she discovered with indignation and alarm, that she had been grossly deceived in the character of the future queen ; who, instead of a simple and pliant girl, was of a temper and genius which scorned controul ; and though apparently obedient to the mandates of a severe mother and rigorous stepfather, possessed a spirit and understanding far above her age and sex. The information was not lost ; for the jealous favourite instantly dispatched the most pressing orders to suspend the conclusion of the match. Her messenger arrived at Parma on the very morning of the ceremony ; but as the object of his commission.

\* These particulars are drawn from the memoirs of St. Simon. They were communicated to Louis the fifteenth in his presence by Chalais himself. *Oeuvres de St. Simon. Note sur la princesse des Ursins, t. 12, p. 282.*

CHAP. 22. was suspected, he was stopped at the entrance of  
1714. the city, and by bribes and threats induced to  
delay his appearance till the ensuing day.\*

On the 16th of September the nuptials were celebrated at Parma, by Ulysses Joseph Gozzalini, bishop of Imola, as papal legate; the duke, as proxy for the catholic king, receiving the hand of his niece.† A messenger instantly conveyed the joyful tidings to Madrid; and the princess, concealing her chagrin and disappointment, affected no less satisfaction than Philip himself.

In a few days the new queen took her departure with a splendid retinue, and embarking on board a galley at Sestri, reached Genoa after a troublesome passage, and continued her journey by land. She was received with regal honours in her journey through France, and at St. Jean Pied de Port passed two days with her aunt, the queen dowager of Spain. On reaching the frontier she dismissed all her attendants, except the marchioness of Piombino, and their places were supplied by the officers and servants of her new household. At Pampeluna she was met by Alberoni, who for his important services was created a count, and received the appointment of envoy from the court of Parma to that of Madrid.

\* Duclos, t. 1, p. 76.—† Poggiali, xvi, p. 282.

On the news of her approach the king quitted the capital to meet his bride at Guadalaxara, where the nuptials were to be consummated. He was accompanied by the princess Orsini and her nephew Chalais, and surrounded with officers and domestics of her appointment. On the evening of the first day he reached Alcala; and here the princess, who had resumed her office of camerara-mayor, quitted him to meet her new mistress. She passed on to Xadraca, a small village four leagues beyond Guadalaxara, where the queen arrived while she was taking some refreshment. She instantly quitted the table, met the queen at the foot of the stairs, and, kneeling, kissed her hand. She was received with apparent complacency, and in virtue of her office conducted her royal mistress to her apartment.

She began to express the usual compliments, and to hint at the impatience of the royal bridegroom. But she was thunderstruck when the queen interrupted her with bitter reproaches, and affected to consider her dress and deportment as equally disrespectful. A mild apology served only to rouse new fury; the queen haughtily silenced her remonstrances, and exclaimed to the guard, "turn out that mad woman, who has dared to insult me." She even assisted in pushing her out of the apartment.

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She called the officer in waiting, and commanded him to arrest the princess, and convey her to the frontier. The officer, hesitating and astonished, represented that the king alone had power to give such an order. "Have you not," she indignantly exclaimed, "his majesty's order to obey me without reserve?" On his reply in the affirmative, she impatiently rejoined, "Then obey me." As he still persisted in requiring a written authority, she called for a pen and ink, and wrote the order on her knee.

The princess was instantly placed in a coach, with only one female attendant, and two officers, without being permitted to change her dress. In this manner, and under an escort of fifty dragoons, she was conveyed during the whole night, which was so severe, that the hand of the coachman was frost-bitten and mortified; and so dark, that they were guided by the light of the snow. Astonishment and consternation at first benumbed her senses, and suspended her faculties. But this state of sullenness gave place to indignation and despair, and these passions were succeeded by deep and bitter reflections on such unexpected, such violent, and unjustifiable treatment. Gradually she began to imagine that the king, whom she supposed to be ignorant of what had passed, would resent such an abuse of his authority, and that some of her numerous adherents in the court

would interest themselves in her behalf. Absorbed in these reflections, she passed the rest of this long and dreadful night without breaking silence; till morning arrived, and it was necessary to stop and bait the horses at a small hovel. She had now time to compose her countenance and weigh her expressions. To her companions she testified extreme surprise at what had happened, and related the circumstances of her interview with the queen. The two officers, long accustomed to fear and respect her more than even the sovereign, suggested such motives of consolation as occurred under the astonishment with which they were themselves overwhelmed.

As she proceeded on the journey, and no news arrived from the king, her hopes became fainter and fainter, and at length gradually vanished. Circumstances which in the first emotion had not touched, now began to affect her. No beds, no provisions, no change of dress, nor even of linen; no defence against the severity of the weather, was to be expected till she arrived at St. Jean de Luz. These multiplied inconveniences excited the most violent transports of rage in a woman so imperious and ambitious, so long accustomed to unbounded power and public consideration, so long habituated to the servility of a court, and to the luxuries and indulgencies of authority and affluence.

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On the third day she was joined, at a small village, by her two nephews, the count of Chalais and the prince of Lanti, with a letter from the king. Disdaining to give any outward sign of depression, she replied to their condolence, "Why do you come to me with that doleful countenance? shake it off, or leave me. I have nothing to reproach myself with, and am perfectly tranquil." As she anxiously inquired respecting the behaviour of the king, and the circumstances which had passed since her departure, they told her that he had passed the whole evening at cards, and expressed impatience to receive a message from her. At one in the morning he retired to rest. When he rose, he was attended by Chalais, and proceeded to Guadalaxara. Here Chalais first heard, from one of the domestics, the news of her arrest, and requested leave for himself and the prince his cousin to follow. Grimaldo brought the permission of the king, and a packet, which, according to his account, contained a donation of the principality of Roses; but they were ordered not to depart before the queen arrived. Soon afterwards Alberoni appearing, was admitted to a private audience, and at eight came the queen herself.

The marriage ceremony was then performed; the king and queen retired to their apartment,

and not a word transpired relative to the fate of the princess. At length, Chalais was permitted to depart; but instead of the donation originally offered, he received a letter, cold and formal, permitting the princess to remain at the place where he might overtake her, and promising that her pensions should be duly discharged.

This faithful account took away all hope; but, at the same time, relieved her from anxiety, and composed her agitated mind. She became suddenly resigned; she shed no tear; she uttered no sigh; she expressed neither regret nor reproach; she shewed no symptom of feminine weakness. She supported without complaint the extreme cold, the want of common necessaries, and the fatigues of the journey, and by patience and fortitude excited the admiration of her guards and attendants.\*

At length, after a journey of twenty-three days, the princess reached St. Jean de Luz, where she was restored to liberty, and left to brood over the recent catastrophe, which appeared as the illusion of a dream. Here she desired permission to wait

\* The reader will please to recollect, that in Spain scarcely any accommodation can be procured on a journey; travellers carrying with them provisions, and even beds and cooking utensils. From the extreme precipitancy with which she had been hurried away, the princess was unprovided with money; she was reduced to borrow a trifling sum of her conductors, and it was not till after the arrival of her nephews that a messenger overtook her with a supply of 1,000 pistoles.

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on the queen dowager at Bayonne, but her request was rejected. Still, however, she entertained hopes of being favourably received at Versailles, and wrote to madame de Maintenon in her customary tone of friendly confidence. "I now inhabit," she said, "a small house near the sea. I see that element sometimes calm, but oftener agitated; fit emblem of courts, of what I have seen; of what has recently happened to myself, and what must excite your generous compassion." She also dispatched her nephew with letters to Louis, and to the ministers, soliciting an asylum in her native land.

After some delay, she was allowed to proceed to Paris, and found a temporary asylum in the house of her brother, the duke of Noirmoutiers. She received numerous visits rather of curiosity than of compassion; and, repairing to Versailles, experienced such attention from the monarch and his courtiers, that she resumed her native gaiety. But in this moment, her reviving hopes were again crushed. At the instigation of the queen, Philip made overtures of reconciliation to the duke of Orleans, and, attributing their former misunderstanding to the princess, released his two agents Regnault and La Rotte, who had been retained in strict confinement. In consequence of this reconciliation, the duke manifested his resentment against the princess, and



obtained from Louis an order forbidding her to appear before any part of the family of Orleans, and thus virtually excluding her from the court.\*

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Of the remaining life of the princess few notices are preserved. All that we know with certainty is, that her attempts to regain the favour of Louis, and the confidence of madame de Main-

\* We have drawn this account from various authors, all worthy of credit, who derived their information from persons actually concerned in the transaction. Among these we may distinguish Duclos, who received his intelligence from the duchess of St. Pierre, the marquis of Brancas, and others who obtained their information from Alberoni; and St. Simon, who has preserved a very interesting memoir, written by the duke of Luynes from the information of Chalais, and from the communications of the queen of Spain herself to the duchess of St. Pierre.—St. Simon, t. 5, p. 227—239.—t. 12, p. 282—309.

We quote the information given by the queen, as decisive of the most contested point in the preceding narrative.

“J’ai marqué un grand détail sur madame des Ursins. Madame de Luynes, en parla à madame la duchesse de St. Pierre, pour qui la Reine d’Espagne avoit beaucoup d’amitié. Madame de St. Pierre dit à madame de Luynes qu’elle avoit beaucoup questionné la reine d’Espagne sur cette aventure, et que la reine l’avoit assurée qu’elle n’avoit agi dans toute cette affaire, que sur un billet du roi d’Espagne. Que le roi d’Espagne étoit persuadé que madame des Ursins avoit fait toute ce qui avoit dépendu d’elle, pour l’engager à l’épouser, et qu’il avoit écrit à la reine qu’elle fût en sorte d’éloigner madame des Ursins, parce qu’elle les empêcheroit assurément de vivre dans l’union où ils devoient être. La reine d’Espagne ajouta que lorsqu’elle rencontra Alberoni elle assaya de l’engager à la servir dans ce dessein, mais n’ayant pu le déterminer, elle fut obligée de lui montrer le billet du roi d’Espagne ce qui mit totalement l’abbé Alberoni dans ses intérêts. La reine d’Espagne convient, qu’elle prit l’apparence d’un prétexte dans la crainte de manquer le moment.”—St. Simon, t. 12, p. 309.—Duclos, t. 1, p. 82.

We likewise refer the reader to St. Philippe, who differs from St. Simon and Duclos in some particulars, t. 3, p. 141.

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tenon, were fruitless. During the height of her power, she had employed her favourite, d'Aubigné, to build a magnificent palace at Chanteloupe, which she destined as her future residence, purposing to exchange her principality in the Netherlands, for the province of Touraine, and the Pays d'Amboise, to revert to the crown on her death. But in her disgrace, she never acknowledged this pompous edifice as her own; and left it to be occupied by d'Aubigné.\* She hovered about Paris and Versailles till the last illness of Louis; but dreading the resentment of the duke of Orleans, in the event of his death, she quitted Paris, and, after being refused an asylum in Holland, resided a short time at Avignon: she next established herself at Genoa. In vain she solicited permission to resume her residence at Rome, during the life of pope Clement; but obtained her request under his successor, and attached herself to the establishment of the Pretender, doing the honours of his house, and as Duclos observes, "consoling herself with the shadow, in default of the substance, of royalty."† She died in 1722, at an advanced age.

The intrigues which occasioned the sudden

\* Chanteloupe was the temporary residence of lord Bolingbroke, afterwards the favourite seat of the duke of Choiseul, and since the revolution, has been inhabited by the celebrated chymist, Chaptal, ex-minister of the interior.

† *Memoires Secrets*, t. 1, p. 83.

disgrace of this celebrated woman in the very meridian of her power, and the singular manner in which it was effected, have long exercised curiosity and conjecture. The most probable opinion seems to be, that Louis the fourteenth was offended with her conduct in retarding the peace, and concluding the marriage of Philip ; the pride of madame de Maintenon was wounded by the ostentation and ingratitude of a woman, who in the height of favour forgot her past obligations ; Philip himself was shocked with her attempts to raise herself to his bed and throne ; and indignant at the bondage in which she had long held him ; lastly, the young queen was offended by the attempt to break off the marriage, and was anxious to free herself from the superintendence of a woman whose abilities she knew, and whose controul she dreaded.

The interests of all parties uniting in her disgrace, little difficulty occurred in arranging the means, though the particulars are uncertain. It appears, however, that Philip, not having the courage to dismiss her in person, sent a private order to the queen, and left the execution to her spirit and discretion. A part of the letter containing the order has been preserved. After requesting the queen to dismiss the princess, he added, “ at least take good care not to delay it ;

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for if she converses with you only two hours, she will captivate you."

From the intriguing character of Alberoni, and his subsequent influence with the queen, this event has been attributed to his machinations, but without foundation; for he was ignorant of the design when he met the queen at Pampeluna. When apprised of it, he endeavoured to dissuade her from the attempt, but she silenced his objections by throwing the letter of Philip on the table; exclaiming, "read that and fear nothing." With this sanction, he contributed his advice and assistance, and conveyed the intelligence to Philip.\*

Orri and his subalterns were involved in the disgrace of their protectress. By the suggestion of Alberoni, the cardinal del Giudice was restored to the royal confidence, re-established in his inquisitorial authority, again intrusted with the direction of foreign affairs, and nominated governor of the prince of Asturias.

When restored to office, he retaliated on the princess and her partisans. He observed to Philip, that the holy office was the support of his monarchy; and procured the signature of a royal decree, enjoining the different councils to represent the injuries done to religion and the

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, 151—163.

state during the late administration. Orri withdrew into France, Robinet was dismissed, and Daubenton replaced in the office of confessor. The innovations introduced into the different departments of administration were revoked; Grimaldo was not only reinstated in his original posts, but as private secretary to the queen enjoyed a principal share in the government. The fall of a foreign domination gave universal satisfaction to the spanish people; and after this great political convulsion, a temporary tranquillity ensued which had been long unknown both in the court and kingdom.

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## CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

1715—1716.

*Death of Louis the fourteenth—Change of policy in the court of Madrid—Rivalry between Philip and the regent duke of Orleans, and his animosity against the emperor—Character of the new queen, Elizabeth Farnese—Rise, ascendancy, and designs of Alberoni.*

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ON the 1st of September, 1715, Louis the fourteenth closed his long and chequered reign, leaving as his successor his great grandson, Louis the fifteenth, a weak and sickly boy in the fifth year of his age. By his will the regency was intrusted to the duke of Orleans, who, from the renunciation of Philip and the death of the duke of Berri, was presumptive heir to the crown ; but the care of the young king's person, and the command of the royal guards, were vested in the duke of Maine, and other restrictions established, which were calculated to reduce the authority of the regent. However, as Louis himself had foreboded,\* the duke of Orleans in an instant swept away all restrictions, and obtained the sanction of the parliament and the acquiescence of the peers in a form of government scarcely

\* St. Simon, t. 6, p. 220.

less absolute than if he had succeeded to the throne in his own right.

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The death of Louis gave a new aspect to the views and situation of the court of Madrid, by changing the relations of France and Spain, and leaving Philip to pursue new political maxims.

Hitherto Spain had been subservient to the will of Louis. Not only the great operations of war and policy, but even the minutest affairs of the court, and the most trivial arrangements in the administration, had been regulated by his orders. In vain the subdued spirit of Philip occasionally revolted against the slavery in which he was held: on the slightest symptom of independence he was haughtily reminded of his endless obligations to the sovereign who had sacrificed his own ease, tranquillity, and interest, to place him on the throne, and was again awed into silence and submission.

The death of Louis dispelled the charm. Philip now deemed himself at liberty to pursue his own principles, as well as to consult his own interests, and those of his adopted country. Personal considerations also contributed to alienate him from the existing government of France. Though he had renounced his pretensions to that crown, he never for an instant relinquished his intention to assert his birth-right in case of a vacancy; and at different times had

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even hesitated whether he should not descend from the throne of Spain to render his pretensions more valid. As the means for attaining his object, he was desirous to secure the regency, which, according to the constitution of France, and the public opinion, would have belonged to him as presumptive heir. He therefore no sooner heard of the decease of Louis than he assembled his confidential counsellors to deliberate on this subject, and was only persuaded to desist from his purpose by the apprehension that an avowal of his claims would rouse the principal powers of Europe against him.\* He was consequently both disappointed and indignant at the conduct of the duke of Orleans in seizing the whole power of the government, which not only frustrated his immediate purpose, but tended to increase the difficulty of realising his distant views on the reversion of the crown.

The peace of Utrecht also formed a new æra in the history of Spain, and the life of the sovereign. Philip, though his faculties were benumbed by the indolent habits derived from his hypochondriac malady, was animated by the lofty spirit which distinguished the princes of the House of Bourbon. He had imbibed from his


\* According to the dispatches of Mr. Dodington, (Sept. 6, 1716,) it was the prevailing opinion at Madrid, that on the death of Louis, Philip would instantly repair to Paris, and Alberoni, in his Apology, claims the merit of dissuading him from the journey.



french education and french advisers a rooted jealousy of the commercial prosperity of the maritime powers, particularly of England, as one of the causes which had materially contributed to diminish the population, depress the trade, and reduce the naval power of Spain. Without losing sight of his eventual succession to the throne of his ancestors, he was not less anxious to recover the strength, promote the welfare, and restore the splendour of his adopted country. Not even the dangers of a struggle involving the very fate of his crown could divert his attention from his darling object; and he eagerly seized the first moment of returning peace to bring forward measures proper for its attainment. In the treaty of commerce concluded at Utrecht with England, the same influence which had so effectually served the House of Bourbon on other occasions, enabled him to introduce into the act of ratification a series of supplemental conditions, under the title of explanatory articles,\* which furnished the pretext to deprive the english of their commercial privileges in Spain; and by the imposition of heavy duties, and incessant vexations, abridged their means of entering into competition with the native trade and fabrics. From this cause the public intercourse with the

\* Treaty of Commerce between England and Spain, Dec. 9, 1713, in Lamberti, t. 2, and other collections of public papers.

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court of England, during the short period since the peace of Utrecht, presented little but a series of complaints and discussions on commercial grievances.\*

The same motive which rendered Philip anxious to restore the commercial prosperity and naval power of Spain, impelled him to recover its territorial grandeur. Notwithstanding the possession of Spain and the Indies, he brooded with sorrow and regret over the dismemberment of the monarchy, and panted for an opportunity to re-unite the Italian territories, Gibraltar, Minorca, and perhaps the Netherlands, to his empire. To political, were likewise added personal motives, for aspiring to these acquisitions. He was urged by the powerful stimulus of resentment against the emperor, who still retained the title, and assumed the honours attached to the crown of Spain.

The different changes in the constitution and state of the kingdom, had greatly contributed to consolidate the power and augment the resources of Philip. The recent dismemberments had rather lopped off the superfluous branches, than weakened the trunk of the monarchy, which was rooted and nourished in the peninsula. By the regulations of Orri, a foundation was laid for a


\* Instructions and Correspondence of the british envoy, Mr. Dodington. Melcombe Papers.

new system of finance and œconomy, and the way opened for eradicating innumerable abuses. Finally, in abolishing the free constitutions of Aragon, Valencia, and Catalonia, Philip had removed a fertile source of internal discord, and a perpetual restraint on his prerogative ; while by subjecting those countries to the same system of administration as the two Castiles, he weakened the local antipathies which had divided Spain into as many nations as provinces, restored vigour to the sinews of government, and made a certain, as well as considerable addition to the royal revenue.

Besides these causes, personal and political, which led to a change in the conduct and policy of Philip, he received an additional impulse from the spirit and ambition of his new queen Elizabeth Farnese.

Melancholy, indolent, and reserved, the slave of habit, uxorious without delicate attachment, fond of splendid enterprizes without the talent to plan or resources to pursue them, he was formed to be governed by his queens, to become the instrument of those designs to which they were prompted by their own interests and passions, or by the suggestions of their advisers. The death of his first consort, and the dismissal of the princess Orsini, produced no change in his solitary and monotonous life ; the new queen

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succeeded to the power as well as the place of her predecessor, and by the same arts became in a few months no less absolute mistress of his will, and arbitress of his monarchy.\*

The character of Elizabeth Farnese, who till the death of Philip had so great a share in embroiling or pacifying Europe, was almost totally opposite to that of her husband. Though educated in a retired corner of the palace at Parma, and secluded from the world by a severe and vigilant mother, she had assiduously cultivated her mind, and was better acquainted with history and politics than the generality of her sex. She also spoke several languages, and possessed an elegant taste for the polite arts.† She was plain, but not uninteresting in countenance, graceful in person, obliging in her address when she wished to conciliate, and gifted with the most fascinating powers of conversation. Imperious and aspiring by nature, she was habituated to constraint and self command by the mode of her education; a perfect mistress of dissimulation; artful and steadfast in her designs, and animated with a spirit which neither time, difficulty, nor opposition could subdue.

All these qualities she called into action to

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, passim.

† Poggiali in his Mem. Istoriche has given a well drawn but too highly coloured portrait of this princess. T. 10, p. 279, 280.

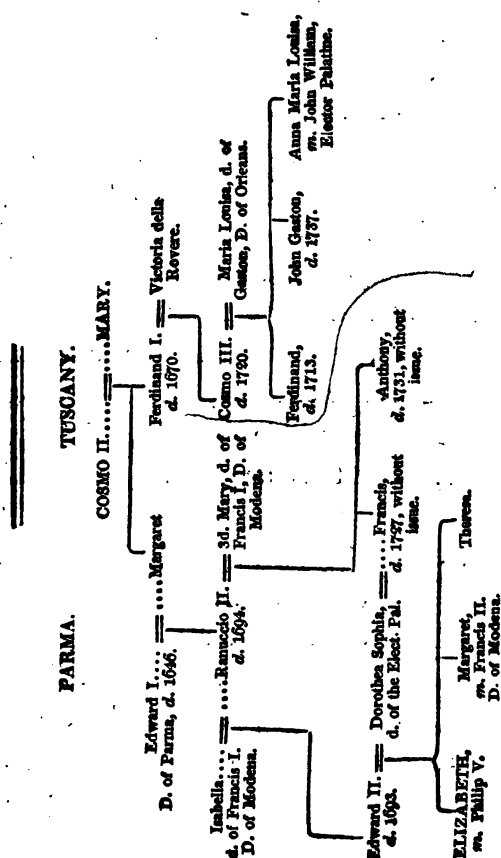
govern her doting husband. Aware that he was jealous of his authority, she ruled without appearing to rule, by practising all the refinements of coquetry, praising him for the beauty of his person, granting or withholding her caresses to serve her political purposes, and affecting the utmost zeal for his glory. She was indefatigable in her attentions, never contradicting him, approving what he approved, or disliking what he disliked; yet adroitly and vigilantly watching all the emotions of his mind, and leading him to adopt her wishes, however contrary to his own. She strengthened his aversion to society; she shared his only and favourite amusement of the chase; she passed a perpetual tête-à-tête with a hypochondriac and unsocial husband, discovering neither disgust nor fatigue; and enlivening the tedium of constraint, solitude, and etiquette with an inexhaustible fund of gaiety and good humour. She thus acquired and consolidated a power which neither time nor accident could shake, and to the last hour of his reign was the real sovereign of Spain.

Recently delivered of a son, Don Carlos, and looking forward to the prospect of a numerous offspring, the ruling principle of her actions was the aggrandisement of her children. She encouraged the views of Philip on the succession of France, with the hope of entailing that crown

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on her own issue, while the sons of the first wife were left to vegetate in Spain. But as this was an uncertain and at best a distant object, she brought forward her own pretensions to Parma, Placentia, and Tuscany, from the succession of which she was only separated by three princes, all without issue.\* She looked forward to the

\* *Genealogical Table of the Houses of FARNESE and MEDICI, shewing the Claims of ELIZABETH FARNESE to the Duchies of PARMA and TUSCANY.*



acquisition of these duchies as an advantageous establishment, should the untimely death of Philip frustrate her more splendid and distant designs.

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The first guide of this enterprising princess, and her master in the science of politics, was Alberoni, who, as her countryman, and the original cause of her elevation, became her counsellor and the depository of her confidence.

Giulio Alberoni was the son of a labouring gardener in a suburb of Placentia, and was born May 21, 1664. He was brought up conformably to his humble station, without instruction, even in the lowest rudiments of learning; and for a time assisted in the daily labours of his father. He shewed little aptitude for this toilsome occupation; but like the celebrated Sixtus the fifth displayed striking proofs of premature talents, and an ardent desire of instruction. About the age of twelve he became in succession servant to the sextons or clerks of two parochial churches. In this situation he attracted the notice of a priest, who taught him to read; afterwards he acquired the rudiments of the Latin tongue, and finally became a pupil in the school of the jesuits. Under these able masters he displayed equal ability and industry, and left several volumes in his own hand writing, which were preserved in

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the time of his biographer Poggiali,\* and shew an intimate and extensive acquaintance with sacred and profane literature. To a lively, bold, and enterprising genius, he joined a supple and insinuating behaviour, and a watchful attention to seize every opportunity of improving his knowledge, which his sagacious mind had discovered to be the surest instrument of fortune.

By these talents, and his winning manners, he gained many friends and protectors; and particularly acquired the patronage of Ignazio Gardini di Ravenna, a judge or coadjutor of the criminal court at Placentia. This patron, however, falling under the displeasure of the sovereign, sought an asylum in his native city; and the young Alberoni voluntarily shared his disgrace.

Such was the path which was marked for his future elevation. At Ravenna he attracted the notice of the vice legate count Barni, who being promoted to the bishopric of Placentia, made him

\* This account of Alberoni's early life is principally drawn from Poggiali's *Memorie Istoriche di Piacenza*. He was a native of Placentia, a contemporary of Alberoni, librarian to the duke of Parma, and derived his information either from notes written by Alberoni himself, or from persons intimately connected with him, who received their intelligence from his own mouth.

We have also had recourse to St. Philippe, St. Simon, and Duclos, and have consulted the *Vita di Alberoni*, which though erroneously supposed to have been written under his own direction, and teeming with errors, contains much curious and authentic information.



his steward. Being, however, as little qualified for the details of this office, as for the labours of a gardener, Alberoni turned his views to the church, was ordained priest in 1690, admitted to a small cure, and by the interest of his patron received a prebend in the cathedral.


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He next became preceptor, or rather companion, to count John Baptista Barni, nephew of his protector, and accompanied him to Rome. In this situation he not only improved his knowledge of classical literature and philosophy, but acquired the french tongue, which was the instrument of his further rise. At Rome he cultivated the acquaintance of many distinguished persons, particularly count Alessandro Roncoveri, afterwards bishop of Borgo St. Domino, the travelling companion of the heir of Parma. On his return to Placentia, chance opened to him a channel of promotion, which he adroitly improved. During the campaigns of Vendôme in Italy, the french and spanish armies were quartered in the duchy, and oppressed the people by heavy contributions. To obtain some relief from these exactions, the duke employed the bishop of St. Domino as his agent to Vendôme, and the prelate being ignorant of the french tongue, chose Alberoni to accompany him as his interpreter.

The vivacity and insinuating address of the young priest had already captivated all to whom

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he became known, had gained numerous patrons, had converted those patrons into friends, and had inspired them with the same solicitude for his interests as for their own. He was no less successful in acquiring the favour of the rough and soldier-like Vendome, than in pleasing his more refined and polished countrymen. During the course of the negotiation, he enlivened the tediousness of discussion with sallies of wit and buffoonery; he gratified the gross taste of the french commander by the most extravagant flattery, and libertine conversation, and by preparing with his own hand such poignant italian dishes as were calculated to provoke a jaded appetite. By these means he gained new favour in every conference. The bishop soon perceived the superior influence of his interpreter, whom Vendome called his 'dear abbot,' and being disgusted with the gross manners of the french commander,\* advised his sovereign to transfer the whole negotiation to Alberoni. The duke adopted the advice, and gave additional consideration to his agent by conferring on him a canonry of Parma; and as he was the guide and interpreter of many french officers of high distinction, who repaired to the court, a salary was added to the donation, with a house in the city to receive his military guests. In this situation he is described

\* St. Simon, t. 12, p. 117.—Duclos, t. 1, p. 248.

by a contemporary writer: "The french officers are pleased with his jocose humour; they amuse the duke of Vendome with repeating the jests, repartees, and witty conceits of Alberoni, whose person is as comical as his conversation; for he has a monstrous large head, a swarthy complexion, a very short neck, broad shoulders, a very low stature. In a word, he is a pigmy, of whom fortune has made a colossus.\*"

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Intimate acquaintance endeared him still more to Vendome, and when he quitted Italy at the close of the campaign Alberoni readily accepted the offer to enter into his service, instead of remaining at the petty court of Parma. He was intrusted with the most *sécret* correspondence of his new master, became his confidential secretary, and accompanied him in the campaign of Flanders: After this arduous period of service, he was introduced, by his patron himself, to Louis the fourteenth, as a man of superior merit, skilful and indefatigable in business, whose advice and exertions had rendered essential service in that difficult campaign. So strong a recommendation procured him the most flattering marks of royal favour, and a pension of 1,600 livres.†

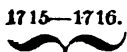
When the presence of Vendome was demanded

\* Essay towards the Life of Alberoni, in Political State for September 1718, p. 206.—Likewise Preface to the Vita del Card. Alberoni.

† Poggiali, t. 10, p. 236.

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in Spain, the powerful influence of Alberoni was employed to induce him to accept the command. He accompanied his patron, displayed his talents and address on numerous occasions, and was repeatedly recommended in the official dispatches to Versailles as a model of fidelity and intelligence, and as assisting, by his dexterity, to rouse the loyalty of the spaniards. Vendome endeavoured likewise to promote his interest at the court of Madrid, by representing him as a man of profound knowledge in finance. Alberoni was accordingly employed to draw up a plan for the regulation of the revenues; and by the assistance of Macanaz, then in the humble situation of a provincial lawyer, he performed the task with such ability that he received the thanks of the king and a gratuity of 500 pistoles.\*

Vendome wanting a confidential and discreet agent near the princess Orsini, could not select for the delicate commission a more proper person than Alberoni, who by his conciliating manners and insinuating address acquired her confidence, removed her jealousy of his patron, and by her influence obtained a pension from Philip. He paid the last tribute of affection to Vendome, who expired in his arms; and even this event, which appeared to cloud all his further prospects, con-

\* Account of Ripperda, by the sicilian abbots. MS. in Walpole Papers.


tributed to his advancement. As the confidant of the deceased commander he repaired to Versailles, described the state of the army, developed his plans, and detailed the measures adopted to ensure success. He was consequently received with great favour and marked distinction, and returning to Madrid with new recommendations, continued to increase his influence with the princess. By the generosity of his patrons, as well as by the produce of his ecclesiastical benefices and pensions, he was now in a state of affluence, and employed his wealth with a liberality and grace which is ever inherent in great minds.

While he was pursuing his fortune in Spain, he did not neglect to improve his interest in his native country. He succeeded in preventing the dismissal of the parmesan agent when the duke incurred the displeasure of Philip by acknowledging Charles\* as king of Spain, and in consequence of this proof of his influence, was soon afterwards appointed to fill the office himself. In this situation he became the means of raising Elizabeth Farnese to the throne of Spain.

The new queen, having according to the customary etiquette dismissed her parmesan attendants, was perfectly insulated in the solitary

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 16.

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court of Madrid. She naturally turned to her countryman Alberoni, to whom she principally owed her elevation, and who, besides his services and attachment, in the capacity of agent from her father in law, was best adapted to become her counsellor from his experience in public affairs, and intimate acquaintance with the court in which she was to figure as a sovereign. By his advice she was principally governed; and from the moment of her arrival his power may be dated; for the disgrace of the princess relieved him from an irksome dependence, and left him without a rival.

Among the first effects of his political power may be reckoned the revocation of the ecclesiastical reforms projected by Orri, the restoration of the holy office to its functions,\* and the reinstatement of the cardinal del Giudice in the direction of foreign affairs, as well as his appointment to the office of governor to the prince of Asturias. Alberoni had also the address to recommend as confessor to the queen Dominico di Guerra, a native of Italy, whose moderate talents and servile character fitted him to become a docile and useful agent. If he did not promote, he at least did not oppose the recal of Daubenton, from a conviction that the memory of past disgrace would

\* St. Philippe.

curb his meddling spirit, and deter him from thwarting the living, as he had attempted to oppose the deceased, queen.\*

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Too adroit and discerning to mar his rising fortunes by a premature attempt to seize the reins of government, Alberoni continued with no other public character than that of minister from Parma, which entitled him to the privilege of a constant and familiar access to the closet. In this situation his profound knowledge of policy, fertility of resource, facility in transacting business, and insinuating address, gave him daily new interest in the mind of an indolent prince, who was no less attached to the splendour, than unequal to the burthens of royalty. He thus gradually rose from the capacity of an occasional adviser to that of a favourite and confidential counsellor, and finally was enabled to wrest from the real ministers the principal management of affairs.

Perfectly acquainted with the ruling passions of Philip and the queen, he knew that his hopes of advancement depended on holding forth the prospect of realising their respective designs. He found, indeed, the nation exhausted by the recent contest, by a defective system of government, and by an endless series of abuses; but he won

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, *passim*.—Alberoni's Apology, in the Historical Register.—Duclos and St. Simon, as before quoted.

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the royal ear while tracing remedies and improvements, and he calculated on the native energy of the spanish character and the vast resources of the monarchy. Aware, however, that a period of tranquillity was necessary to give effect to his measures and accumulate the means for future enterprise, he does not appear to have flattered the passion of Philip for war; but according to his own avowal, which is corroborated by the tenour of his discourses with the british envoy, he invariably inculcated the maxim, "If your majesty will maintain your country in peace for five years, I will pledge myself to render you the most powerful monarch in Europe."\* To prove the truth of his promises, he employed the able assistance of his friend baron Ripperda, in tracing a new system of political œconomy, for improving the finances, reducing the expenditure, correcting abuses, reviving trade, raising a navy and army, and restoring Spain to her former ascendancy in the civilised world.† This plan, presented and supported by the queen, captivated the sanguine imagination of Philip, who was fond of splendid designs, and conscious of the mismanagement which pervaded every department of the state.

\* Apology of Alberoni.—History of Europe for 1722. p. 201.

† Account of Ripperda, by the two sicilian abbots, Platania and Caraccioli. MS. Walpole Papers.



CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

1716—1717.


*State of Europe—Political and commercial disputes between Spain and England, and views of Philip on the french throne—Alberoni promotes a breach with France and an union with England—Signature of a commercial treaty—Declaration of Philip against the Pretender—Correspondence of Mr. Dodington, british envoy, and his intercourse with Alberoni—Overtures to England for an alliance against the emperor—Declined—Treaties which led to the conclusion of the triple alliance.*

AS the means of tracing the progress, and developing the designs of a minister under whom Spain was destined to assume a new character, it is proper to take a brief review of the different powers more immediately interested in the affairs of the peninsula, as they were affected by the peace of Utrecht.

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Although the emperor could no longer cherish the hope of wresting the spanish sceptre from his more fortunate competitor, he still persisted in bearing the title of king. He bestowed the spanish order of the golden fleece; he established at Vienna a tribunal formed of his spanish adherents, under the presidency of the ex-bishop of Valencia, and called from its functions the

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council of Spain; he also confiscated in the Netherlands and in Italy the property of those who had acknowledged Philip.

The disputes arising from the hasty and imperfect arrangement which closed the war of the succession, had occasioned a breach between Austria and the maritime powers. The emperor was indignant at the loss of Sicily, and still more irritated at the onerous terms on which he was to receive the Netherlands; the occupation of the principal fortresses by the dutch garrisons, with the appropriation of the revenues for their maintenance; and the shackles imposed by the commercial cupidity of the maritime powers, on the trade and manufactures of this rich and industrious people. At this juncture he was involved in a war with the turks, which obliged him to draw his forces into the remote provinces of Hungary, and leave his newly acquired dominions in Italy almost defenceless.\*

The dutch were scarcely less alienated from Great Britain than from the emperor, by the discussions relative to their barrier; and, besides their jealousy of the english, who had deprived them of many of their commercial advantages, they were vigilantly watching for an opportunity to recover their lucrative trade to the spanish territories in the old and new world.

\* House of Austria, Chapters 3 and 5.

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George the first, the new king of England, in addition to his disputes with the emperor and the dutch, was involved in peculiar difficulties. He had, indeed, ascended the british throne with unexpected tranquillity, and had seen the party who had so lightly sacrificed the national interest exposed to the vengeance of their offended country. But the calm was of short duration. The jacobites, who, at the close of the late reign, had acquired a dangerous ascendancy, had now broken into open rebellion, and were favoured by the disappointed and factious of other parties. The Pretender had actually landed in Scotland to make a decisive effort for the throne, and was encouraged by secret assistance both from France and Spain.

Jan. 1716.

The whigs, who had paved the way for the accession of the House of Brunswick, were weakened by their own personal contentions, and the schism was already commencing which, in the following year, threw the most powerful chiefs of the party into the opposition. Even the royal palace was the scene of feuds; and the rising disputes of the king with the prince of Wales at once disturbed his domestic peace, and increased the insecurity of his throne.

The popularity attending the accession of a new sovereign, and the formation of a new administration, had rapidly subsided. A train of

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mistresses and adherents, by their rapacity excited the national jealousy against foreigners; and every measure of the sovereign was censured as derived from german views, and directed by german agents.

George had equally offended the two great powers of the north, Sweden and Russia, by wresting from Sweden Bremen and Verden, and by thwarting the attempts of Russia to form an establishment in the empire. With France he was also engaged in disputes relative to the fulfilment of the recent treaties, particularly to the two important points, the rasure of Dunkirk, and the dismissal of the Pretender. Finally, in his intercourse with Spain, he encountered still greater difficulties, both political and commercial, derived from the same fertile source; for notwithstanding the positive engagements of the treaty, the *asiento* was still unsettled, and the british merchants daily exposed to new vexations.\*

The war of the succession had only contributed to exasperate that political rivalry which had rendered France the most dangerous and inveterate enemy of England. Although the effects of the recent conflict were yet too severely felt in her finances and population to permit the resumption of those ambitious designs which had endangered the liberties of Europe, motives

\* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chs. 9—16.


were not wanting for indirect hostility, nor means for aggravating the troubles which impended over the House of Brunswick. While, however, the government was thus profiting by the internal disorders of a rival power, the nation itself was agitated with a ferment which threatened the renewal of civil wars. The change in the order of succession appeared to have shaken the very foundations of the monarchy. A numerous party both in the cabinet and the country, fostered a zealous attachment to Philip as the lineal descendant of their late monarch, and the principal support of that political system which had rendered France the arbitress of Europe.\*

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Victor Amadeus, king of Sicily, was dissatisfied with the cessions which had been made to reward his services in the late war. With the characteristic cupidity of his house, he was anxious to obtain the Milanese with the title of king of Lombardy, in exchange for Sicily, which, however valuable in itself, was a distant and precarious possession to a prince without naval power. For this purpose he was engaged in a secret negotiation with the emperor; and he flattered himself with the hope of obtaining an eventual claim to a part of the austrian succession, by uniting his son, the prince of Piemont, with one of the Josephine archduchesses. He was,

\* Memoirs of the regent duke of Orleans.

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however, not disinclined to listen to any overture which might increase his consequence, or afford the prospect of advantage in other quarters.

The pope did not, without jealousy, behold the House of Austria uniting Naples with the empire and the Milanese, and reviving the dangerous power possessed by the Suabian emperors in Italy. To this general ground of jealousy were added inferior causes of dispute, concerning the principality of Comacchio, and the feudal superiority of Parma and Placentia. Hence, although of little weight as a temporal prince, the pope was disposed to grant his spiritual support to Philip, and the favours of the church were too important to be disregarded in a catholic country like Spain.

The minor states of Italy, harassed by the exactions of the emperor, and alarmed by his claims of feudal superiority, were looking forward to the support of some foreign power, under whose protection they might find security.

In such a situation of public affairs, Alberoni duly estimated the weight of England and Holland in the political balance, and the value of their assistance, or even connivance, in his design to restore the spanish dominion in Italy. He, therefore, successfully laboured to overcome the aversion of his sovereign to the two powers who

had been his most dangerous enemies in the recent contest, and even pledged himself for their secret or open assistance. He assiduously courted the friendship of the dutch minister, baron Ripperda, and through his intervention endeavoured to purchase the naval support of the republic, by proposing to take twelve of its ships into spanish pay, as a protection to the american trade. Aware also that Holland would be essentially influenced by England, he employed the agency of Ripperda to introduce himself to the notice of the british government, and tendered his services to restore a good understanding with Spain.

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The british envoy\* thus describes the first appearance of this new political agent, whom he had hitherto never spoken to, or even seen.

“ Baron Ripperda informs me that he received a message to repair to court, where a person waited to speak with him, by order of the king. He went, and found a gentleman† of great consequence, who, he says, shewed him a power from the king, authorising him to speak on the part of his majesty. They talked much relative

\* The british envoy at this period was Mr. Bubb, who afterwards changed his name to Dodington, and terminated his political career under the title of lord Melcombe. He was left in charge of the british affairs on the departure of Mr. Methuen, and though young gave proofs of great discretion and talents in this delicate crisis.

† Alberoni.

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to dutch affairs, on which full satisfaction was promised. Afterwards the gentleman desired him to come to me this evening, and inform me, as from the king, that his majesty was perfectly disposed to live in good understanding with my sovereign. To give all imaginable proofs of it, he was ready to consent to annul the explanatory articles, and do every thing calculated to promote a good intelligence between his britannic majesty and himself. Of this the gentleman desired I would apprise my sovereign this night.”\*

In a subsequent letter the envoy adds, “ I have found out the gentleman, who alone is absolute here. He has gained an entire ascendant over the queen, and, by that means, over the king, who is not a lover of business, and suffers himself to be governed by her majesty. I ought to add, I see no party forming capable of opposing him.”†

In the first public intercourse which had succeeded the peace of Utrecht, the british government had struggled against all the influence of the great bourbon party, headed and directed by the cardinal del Giudice, the principal minister, and against all the tardiness, contra-

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, Sept. 20, N. S. 1715.  
—Melcombe Papers, in the possession of H. P. Wyndham, esq. M. P.

† Ibid. Oct. 11, N. S.



diction, and prejudices of the spaniards themselves. No sooner, however, did Alberoni appear on the scene, than all difficulties vanished. The commercial discussions, which had been thwarted at every step, were immediately terminated. Alberoni became himself the bearer and advocate of a project for a new treaty, abrogating the explanatory articles, obviating all the points in dispute, and restoring the english to the commercial advantages which they enjoyed under the austrian princes.\*

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The british envoy, triumphantly announcing this transaction to his court, observes, “ We signed the treaty, which is inclosed, last night after a thousand wranglings. \* \* \* I flatter myself, that upon the whole we shall find ourselves in right to pretend to all the advantages we enjoyed at the time of king Charles the second, and the first article seems to set our duties on the same foot, with the same advantages and favours.

Dec. 12.

“ The ratification is agreed to in six weeks, of which I was very glad, that we may finish as soon as possible. For you will please to observe, that the ministry here have done every thing they could against us, partly from the narrowness of their views, partly from the monstrous inventions which the irish have spread about our disturbances

\* Project of the Treaty. Melcombe Papers.—Treaty of Commerce between Spain and England, Dec. 3-14, 1715.

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at home, which some of them are weak enough to believe in a great measure. I have not thought it consistent with the honour of the king to endeavour to undeceive any of them, except his catholic majesty, who I hope is in a very sincere disposition to live in perfect friendship with his majesty. However, this being so, whatever we settled with the king in the morning, the cardinal del Giudice and his party undid at night; and raised a thousand suspicions, that I never knew what to depend on. We have been on the point of signing any time these eight days.

“ Yesterday I got a friend of ours (Alberoni) to draw up this instrument, and go to the king, and, with my duty, tell his catholic majesty, that I conceived it contained exactly what he had several times been pleased to approve; and as I had in every thing obeyed his commands to the utmost, in bringing it to his very words, I hoped he would consider, that no more lay in my power, and would be pleased to end this affair one way or other. The gentleman did so; the king read it over, and asked his opinion. He said he thought the demand very reasonable, and if his majesty approved of it, it would be best to declare and finish it at once. The king said he was very well satisfied, and bid him have it signed. He went to the office and ordered a full power for the marquis of Bedmar, and as soon

as it was ready in the evening, we met at Bedmar's house, who keeps his bed, and I fancy never heard of the matter till dinner time. There, after reading the instruments, they were signed, and the other sent to the king. This was the first time, and probably may be the last, that I ever saw the marquis of Bedmar.

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“Count Alberoni has behaved very obligingly and heartily in this affair, and orders me to say abundance more to you, of service for you, than I shall trouble you with at present. Only any thing that you will order me to say to him from the king or yourself, will be very well taken, and may be of use.”\*

Nor did the services of the adroit and insinuating favourite end here. He persuaded the king not only to withhold the assistance promised by his ministers to the Pretender, but even prompted him to adopt the strongest terms of solicitude and friendship for the king of England. When del Giudice ventured to express his surprise at the conclusion of so advantageous a treaty with a prince who tottered on his throne, and recommended the interests of the Pretender, whose progress in England he exaggerated; Philip, to his surprise and consternation, interrupted his representations with the brief, but

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, Dec. 12, 1715. Melcombe Papers.

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decisive reply, " I consider the king of England as my brother, and am determined to live in friendship with him. Let me hear no more on this subject."\*

Not content with this private declaration, Alberoni obtained from the sovereign a public and solemn pledge of his determination to give no support to the Pretender or his adherents. The paper was arranged between Alberoni and the british envoy, and the sanction of the king given with the same alacrity as to the commercial treaty. The publication of this paper made a great sensation in Spain, and contributed to discourage the partisans of the exiled family, both in England and abroad.

The services of Alberoni were so warmly acknowledged by the british government, that he deemed himself secure of their support, or at least their connivance, in whatever designs he might chuse to undertake. He therefore availed himself of the occupation of Novi by the imperial troops, to appeal to the king of England as a guarantee of the neutrality of Italy ; and even laboured to entangle him in an alliance with Spain, under the plausible plea of maintaining the faith of his public engagements. Confiding in the effect of these representations, the king of

\* Dispatch of Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, April 27, 1716.

Spain offered the genoese the support of a corps of spanish troops, and his effectual protection against the oppressions of the emperor.\*

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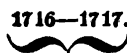
The british envoy himself was induced to become the proposer and advocate of this new connection with Spain. "I by no means," he observed, "presume to form new schemes of power; but I fancy it might be so contrived, that by a compliance with our guaranty in a point, which it appears necessary to engage in, we might entirely ruin the french power here, and utterly divide the two nations. We might so highly oblige the queen, who is absolute, that his majesty would be looked upon as the protector of Spain, and be more favoured in commerce than ever. We might induce this crown to enter into the guaranty of the protestant succession, the strengthening of which alone, while there is any virtue in England, will be more valuable to us than any thing under heaven, to say nothing of the joint guaranty of the barrier for the dutch, to which Spain may possibly be brought, and which I regard as an essential, though remote part of our security."

Cautiously suggesting the proposal, he continued, "I proceed to explain, what I believe are the views of this court, and what may probably engage it to make such alliances and

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 169.

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take such measures as his majesty pleases, both now and in future. I know not what may have been written to you on this affair, but I believe they have asked nothing specifically, because they have asked nothing of me, that they might not expose themselves to a denial. But in case his majesty should think of making a fast friend of Spain, and determine in their favour, I imagine the first thing asked of him, will be to interpose his good offices with the emperor to innovate nothing in Italy; and to send some men of war up the Mediterranean to countenance the king of Spain's ships as his ally, under the pretence of hindering a landing by the turks. If in the mean time his majesty will set a negotiation on foot, for a stricter union with Spain, I am satisfied he may obtain conditions which we had very little reason to expect six months ago."

He did not conclude his dispatch without adverting to an article calculated to gratify the queen. "His majesty is already guaranty of Italy. If he would go one step further, and guaranty the preservation of the states of Parma and Tuscany to the queen and her heirs, I am of opinion he might obtain very ample conditions, at the head of which I consider the guaranty of the crown in his majesty's royal family and of the barrier treaty. I thought on this particular thing,


because we shall thereby so highly oblige the queen, whose son is the fourth prince of Spain, and can pretend to nothing from the succession, that I doubt not his majesty will in time be as much considered here, and more beloved than ever the french were."

" I think it is at present in his majesty's breast to make as strict an alliance as he pleases, and to lay so firm a foundation, by the conditions he may obtain, that the nation will soon be brought to its ancient bent, which was always in our favour, and his majesty be more considered here than ever his predecessors have been. As to the french, they have not the least influence here ; and the creating and advancing that breach has been the chief difficulty in the negotiation. This court has treated them very indifferently of late, and is disposed to treat them just as his majesty pleases, so that I believe they will never be able to lift up their heads here, unless we let slip this favourable conjuncture.

" The king of Spain has broken entirely with his old friends, in making a treaty which has highly disoblged them, without any condition for himself, and in opposition to all its ministers. Since he seems to have thrown himself so fairly into our hands, if we should now refuse him, he will be most sensibly mortified.

" As low as Spain is, there is no nation can so

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soon retrieve itself; and sooner at present than ever. Formerly the dominions in Italy and Flanders were a vast charge to them instead of an advantage. They were maintained by the resources of the Indies and of the two Castiles, whereas at present this expence is at an end; the Castiles pay rather more than ever, while the king draws considerable resources from Aragon and Catalonia, which paid little or nothing before. In fact his resources exceed, by one third, those of any of his predecessors, and his expences are reduced one half; so with a little order he will soon make himself an useful ally.

“ It would be a most sensible pleasure to me, nor do I despair of it, to see his majesty in a twelve-month’s time, (and it is hardly so long since he began to act in the affairs of Spain) make his subjects trade supportable here; bring so great a guaranty into the succession and barrier treaty; separate Spain and France more effectually than a war of fifteen years has done, and establish a lasting alliance in the place. In short, to see him do more good for his people with respect to Spain in one year, than all our late mismanagements have done hurt in four.”\*

Had England been disposed to sacrifice her

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, Feb. 19, 1715.—  
Melcombe Papers.




political to her commercial interests, this was the opportunity to have formed an intimate connection with Spain. But the british ministers, fully acquainted with the rooted jealousy fostered by the spanish court against the commercial prosperity of other powers, were too prudent to engage in hostilities for the sake of maintaining a treaty which might be as lightly revoked as it had been lightly concluded. Sensible also that the nation needed repose to recover from the weakness occasioned by a long and expensive contest, and embarrassed by civil war, they were chiefly anxious to establish the public tranquillity, and to deprive the jacobites of the dangerous support of France.

Hence they dexterously evaded the proposal of the spanish court, though with professions of amity calculated to soften their refusal. "His majesty," they observed, "was perfectly disposed to enter into a new treaty with the catholic king, to renew and confirm the past; but the actual situation of affairs did not permit him to form other engagements, which, far from contributing to preserve the neutrality of Italy, would give rise to jealousies tending to disturb it."\*

The failure of the regent to regain the french ascendancy in Spain, his personal anxiety to

\* Secretary Stanhope to Mr. Dodington, March 13, 1715-6.

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secure the eventual succession to the crown, joined with the overthrow of the rebellion in favour of the Pretender, induced him to overstep the antiquated system of policy, and adopt new maxims with regard to England. This coincidence of public and private interests led to the formation of a great alliance, the sole object of which was the preservation of public tranquillity, and the confirmation of the provisions in the treaty of Utrecht, concerning the succession to the two crowns.

The progressive steps to this alliance were a series of individual treaties. In February, the king of England renewed his union with the states general, and in May, entered into an alliance with the emperor, for the reciprocal defence of their respective territories, with an unusual clause comprising the guaranty of such future acquisitions as they should make by mutual consent. These treaties were the prelude to an arrangement between France and England in June, by which the Pretender was to be sent beyond the Alps, the fortifications of Dunkirk to be rased, and the succession of both crowns, according to the treaty of Utrecht, secured by a mutual guaranty. All subordinate points being thus separately accommodated, these different engagements were, in July, consolidated in the

triple alliance between France, England, and the United Provinces, and as the means of rewarding the accession of the emperor, secret arrangements appear to have been formed for securing to him the island of Sicily in exchange for Sardinia.

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## CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH

1716—1717.

*Indignation of Philip at the treaties between England, the emperor, and France—Artful conduct of Alberoni—His attempts to alarm or lure England into an alliance with Spain—Conferences of Alberoni with the british envoy—Extracts from the correspondence of Mr. Dodington, relative to the situation and views of Alberoni.*

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WHILE Philip and Alberoni were flattering themselves with the prospect of obtaining the assistance of England in their designs against Italy, they were thunderstruck with the intelligence of the treaty between England and the emperor, the very rumour of which had already excited their alarm.

When the unwelcome account of the negotiation was transmitted by Monteleon, the spanish ambassador in London, the king bitterly reproached Alberoni with his rashness and overweening confidence: "Where," he tauntingly asked, "are your english and dutch, of whose friendship and assistance you so much boasted? What can you say in their defence, after seeing them engage in new alliances with our greatest enemies, and after granting at your suggestion

all their demands, and entering into all their measures!" To the reply, that even if the intelligence was true, England had nevertheless offered her alliance, the king impatiently rejoined, "I will not believe it. Let them do as they will. I will take measures, which, however disagreeable, are unavoidable; for I cannot trust to these two nations. But I will persevere in my friendly disposition, till I am convinced there is no remedy." Then, apostrophising Alberoni, he continued, "On your word I have abandoned my old friends. To what an extremity am I reduced. I have not a single friend. You have finely advised me!"

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Alberoni was, if possible, still more mortified than Philip himself; and his imperious temper swelled with indignation at being made the dupe of his own sanguine hopes, as well as of the professions made by the british court. But, conscious that resentment was fruitless, he suppressed the emotions of anger and disappointment; and continued to hold the language of conciliation and friendship, though mixed with expressions of complaint and regret. In his conferences with the british envoy, he chiefly dwelt on the disappointment and chagrin of his royal master. "I never before," he declared, "saw him so deeply affected. He never treated me with equal indignity, regarding me as the cause of this

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unexpected, this unheard of affront, for advising him to break with the regent, and connect himself with England. It is scarcely possible to transact business with him.

“ His majesty complains that the article by which the two parties not only guaranty their present possessions, but also whatever may be acquired by mutual consent, is directly levelled against him, because the emperor can make no acquisition in Italy except to his prejudice. He objects likewise to the stipulation that no power shall be admitted into the alliance except by mutual consent, as expressly intended to exclude him. But what alliance can England make with Spain? what compensation can she give for the favourable terms of the late convention, if she at the same time enter into a connection with the emperor? Spain has no cause to fear France; and we are convinced that the maritime powers will not become our enemies, nor England maintain her engagements for the guaranty of Italy. We only require that the king, your master, will enter into a discussion of our rights, and adopt the part which is most just, and most consonant to his own interests.

“ Next to God, the king, my master, looks up to yours: he is disposed to cultivate his friendship, and to favour the commercial interests of his people. For your sake he has broken

his covenants with France, and irrevocably separated himself from the other branch of the bourbon family. We can indeed never be induced to harbour so unworthy a sentiment, as to imagine that England will join our enemies without a cause; but you must not wonder if my royal master is indignant; you must not deem it extraordinary if we are astonished at a treaty, concluded at a time when you have nothing to fear, and for which no possible cause can be assigned.

“ Consider, I intreat you, the cruel situation in which I stand. I, who alone persuaded my master to renounce his family connections. I, who persuaded him to remove the grievances laid on the english trade by the treaty of commerce. I, who persuaded him to grant the recent treaty, so advantageous to your interests, and am equally ready and willing to procure for you the settlement of the asiento so long delayed. How can I appear before my royal master; I, who pledged my word for your sincerity, and became the organ of your repeated assurances that England would cultivate his friendship? How can I appear before him, who have so recently deceived him?”

To all the declarations of the british envoy that the alliance with the emperor was purely defensive; to all his asseverations that it contained nothing injurious to Spain, the same answer was re-

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peatedly given, " England has made an alliance with our mortal enemy ; with one who refuses to acknowledge Philip as king of Spain ; with one who has heaped on him insult upon insult, and whose vast power in Italy will involve all the minor states in one common destruction."\*

But, however deeply Alberoni felt his disappointment, he was still unwilling to relinquish the hope of detaching the king of England from France, and of inducing him not to oppose, if he would not assist in reducing, the austrian power in Italy. He therefore adopted a mode of conduct calculated to operate equally on their fears and hopes. He suffered the custom-house officers to exercise new vexations on the british merchants, and suspended the execution of the recent treaty.

By his connivance the english merchants were subjected to all the exactions which the convention was intended to remove. They were even charged with additional imposts, called on to pay the local and municipal taxes, from which they had hitherto been exempted, and compelled to permit the quartering of soldiers in their houses, or punished with confinement for asserting their privileges.

Still, however, he affected to appear as the unalterable friend of England ; as anxious to

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, April 27, and May 4, 1716. *Malcombe Papers.*



soothe the irritation of Philip, to obtain a redress of grievances, and the execution of the treaty in which he had so considerable a share. In reply to repeated remonstrances of the british envoy, he lamented his own want of power; expatiated on the malicious opposition of the spanish ministers, who were equally his own enemies, and the enemies of England, and referred to the time when he hoped to assume the name and authority of a prime minister, and to prove his sincerity by deeds, not by words.


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“ I see plainly,” he said, “ that the king has a set of people about him who are my enemies; but he is so full of doubts and so irresolute, that notwithstanding the ascendant the queen has over him, it is inconceivably difficult to bring him into any vigorous measures. For my own part, I have been so discouraged, that I had made a solemn declaration never more to concern myself with business. However, notwithstanding the umbrage which his majesty has taken at your treating with the court of Vienna, I will speak once more, and let you know my success. You may depend upon it that I will serve you to the utmost of my power, and what I would not do for you, I would not do for any one living.”\*

By this dexterous management, Alberoni succeeded in preventing an open breach, and

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, July 18, NS. 1716.

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endeavoured by lures and threats to detach England from France and the emperor; while he laboured to soothe the irritation of Philip, and protract a rupture till he was better prepared for the renewal of hostilities, which he deprecated as the ruin of Spain.

His frank and insinuating address, his repeated and solemn promises of future service, in some measure prevailed; and the british envoy anticipated his elevation to the roman purple, as the period which was to terminate all existing difficulties, and as a new æra in the political relations of England and Spain.

In the preceding pages we have frequently employed the correspondence of the bourbon sovereigns and their agents as the most authentic expression of their sentiments, and the most faithful detail of their views and designs. We are fortunately enabled to follow the motions of the spanish court, in their change of policy, and to trace the conduct and rise of the new favourite, from the correspondence of the british envoy, with whom Alberoni maintained an almost daily intercourse. It would be difficult to produce examples of more profound dissimulation and exquisite address.

One of the many instances in which the assistance of Alberoni was employed with advantage, was the establishment of a secret and direct

correspondence between the two courts, in order to supersede the agency of Monteleon, who, from a partisan of England, was become an adherent of del Giudice and the french faction, and in his situation of ambassador at London, was enabled to raise continual difficulties in the arrangement of the various points at issue. The origin of this correspondence was the renewal of an acquaintance which Mr. Stanhope, when a prisoner at Saragossa, had formed with Alberoni, then in the service of Vendome, and the first letter which occurs, was written to return thanks for the conclusion of the commercial treaty. After adverting to their former intimacy, and recalling the predictions which he had then hazarded that merit so distinguished could not fail of advancement, Mr. Stanhope expresses his satisfaction that he had so skilfully divined, and proceeds :


“ The king, my master, is much gratified with the conduct of the king of Spain in terminating our discussions at a season which might have furnished specious pretexts for cavil, had he been disposed to take false impressions on the state of our affairs. His catholic majesty has acted like a wise and just prince. I may venture to promise that the event will shew he has not been deceived. England knows how to be a friend. She has expended 200,000,000 crowns with the sole view of having a king of Spain her friend. The present

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king has just given a solid proof of his amicable intentions. Judge then what we would do for him, should it happen that he has occasion for us. In all cases, sir, behold the foundation of a sincere and lasting friendship. You have begun the edifice, and to you I am ordered, by the king my master, to address myself for the completion.

“ Mr. Dodington will have the honour to speak to you on the affair of the asiento. Enlightened as you are, I am persuaded, you will be fully convinced, that Spain is more interested than England in what he will propose to you on the part of the south sea company. I entreat you to give him a favourable hearing; and to make such a report to the king of Spain as you may judge suitable to his interests. This stumbling block once removed, I see nothing to affect the union between the two powers, which we, in England, think absolutely necessary, not only for the welfare of both nations, but for the tranquillity of all Europe. I wish, with all my heart, that you may have the honour to strengthen this salutary union more and more, by your advice and good offices.”

Alberoni was flattered with these professions from the confidential minister of George the first, and anticipated the zealous support of England. The correspondence thus begun, was continued with equal cordiality by both parties,




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and few letters had passed, before the trammels of office were completely superseded. A letter from Mr. Dodington shews the nature and effect of this new mode of intercourse.

“ I went to Aranjuez, and got thither Wednesday the 6th, in the morning, before M. Alheroni was up: I left your letter to be delivered to him as soon as he waked, and went into the garden. At my return, he was in the queen’s apartment, from whence I sent for him. I told him what you did me the honour to write to me about his majesty’s good intentions for the king of Spain, and read to him the latter part of the letter. He seemed mightily pleased, and told me that you had written to him a very obliging letter; that he had already read it to the queen, and they would take their measures, and shew it to the king in the afternoon. I am a little acquainted with him, and saw that it had an extraordinary good effect, and might be a favourable occasion to push the matter. I told him that from what I had read to him, it was plain how much it was his majesty’s resolution to cultivate a strict friendship with the catholic king; but I had good grounds to suspect that it had been much misrepresented of late. That I must inform him we knew most certainly the marquis of Monteleon was entirely in the french interest, and his enemy, as well as a friend to the Pretender, and a creature of the

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cardinal. From most incontestible proofs, the king was so fully convinced of this, that I thought I should be wanting in my duty, if I did not demand his recal.

“ He answered, he was much surprised at what he heard. Monteleon was a man who had nothing at all in Spain ; he had served a good while, and had been trusted with some secrets, and, therefore, they must do what they did with as little *eclat* as possible.

“ Finding that he was not well disposed, I told him I would not affirm that the point which so much alarmed them was wholly false, because I knew nothing of it either directly or indirectly. But I would venture to affirm that it was either false or of no consequence. I said, if it were otherwise, it is inconceivable that a thing of such importance should be confided to a minister of Spain, and that at a time when his majesty did me the honour to inform me that he had most ample demonstrations of his being an improper person to promote the union between the two crowns ; so improper that I could not avoid insisting that he should be recalled.


“ He replied, he had all imaginable reason to hope there was nothing in it, from your letter, which came very luckily, and, I can assure you, did a great deal of service. He promised me that Monteleon should be recalled, and shortly.

In the mean time, he desired that no regard might be had to any thing he said ; and assured me no sort of credit should be given here to what came from him. He requested when any thing was to be done you would be pleased to write to him or to me, and we would settle it among ourselves ; and it should never be seen except by the two kings, the queen, and us three. He told me you had wrote to him all in your own hand, and fetched the letter to shew me how many pages there were of it. I mention this last to remind you that there are some people who love mightily to be complimented. I must repeat to you that the letter has done an infinite deal of good, and came at the conjuncture when there was the most need of it.

“ I then told him that it was obvious these proceedings were the effects of the rage of the french partisans in this court, headed by the cardinal, who had made use of his emissary, Monteleon, to create groundless jealousies, and break the union between the two crowns, which he had established with so much glory to his catholic majesty and himself.

“ The french party hoped by these extravagant misrepresentations to precipitate the king into some hasty measure and lessen his credit, since it could not be cleared up in less than six weeks ;

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and if their workings should prove ineffectual in that time, they were at last but where they set out, that is, entirely defeated. I told him, this was an occasion not to be overlooked of striking at the root, and routing them at once, or else they would sooner or later overturn *him*. He might depend upon it, the king of Spain would always find a true friend in his majesty, and he as many friends as his majesty had ministers, and a particular one in you. I am of opinion I have persuaded him so far, that he will not lose an opportunity of revenging himself.

“ From thence I took an occasion to represent the propriety of finishing the *asiento*, that I might dispatch the messenger, and we might both write more freely to England. He told me it should be done next week, and I settled with him to come this day se’night and fetch it.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ At the same time I cannot say the late treaty is put in execution, or the necessary orders given for placing things on a right footing. But this I ascribe to the great disorders of their government ; their continual parties of hunting, and frequent absences from Madrid, with this last alarm, rather than want of will, which I cannot but think to be good. Though M. Alberoni is absolute with their majesties, he is not yet entirely master



of the ministry; but if the king, our master, CHAP. 25.  
pleases to support him, I believe he will shortly 1716—1717.  
be so. \* \* \* \*

“The queen, either really or out of complaisance to the king, is as much given to hunting as he is. M. Alberoni has talked to me much about our english horses, for the spanish are too fiery for a lady, and she was lately in danger of being thrown. He says he has orders to send for some. If his majesty should think fit to send her two or three, I fancy it would be taken as a high compliment, and would certainly keep her more a friend than is to be imagined from such a trifle.”\*

We soon discover proofs that these representations were not without effect.

“The day,” writes Mr. Dodington, “when I thought to go to Aranjuez, M. Alberoni came to me, and saved me the journey. The next, which was last Wednesday, we were together all the morning.

“After having talked over the business of the asiento, I represented to him, in the warmest manner, the delay in executing the treaty, and the mode of treating our merchants here. I detailed to him all the reasons contained in the inclosed memorial, and the ill consequences which must necessarily result from such proceedings.

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, May 11, NS. 1716.

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He told me he hoped the king of England was sensible that by the channel I had employed, we had made some steps, certainly not useless to his service, and he doubted not the rest would follow. That I might assure his majesty he was convinced of the justice of my representations, and was as much mortified at these things as we could be; that he would always continue to do the utmost for his majesty's service, believing that it was for the interests of Spain.

"I am not," he added, "yet master here; nor have the queen or myself a single person on whom we can depend. *If I did not hope to overcome the foreign spirit which reigns in these counsels, I would not remain twenty-four hours in Spain.* The queen is forced to proceed gradually; and I cannot always induce her to apply herself so much as I wish. Indeed it is difficult to engage a young lady in examining matters of trade.

"After much discourse, we agreed that I should present a memorial to the king, pressing the execution of the treaty. I drew up the inclosed and gave it to Alberoni, who promised me to use all the means in his power to put things in better order, and indeed I believe it is not his fault.

"I shall take the liberty to trouble his majesty with a little sketch of the situation of this court,

to which he will be pleased to refer what I have the honour to write to him hereafter.

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“ We have two parties here, one spanish, and the other french. The spaniards oppose, and create as many difficulties as they can, rather because things are not done by themselves, than from any real ill will to us. You well know that these grandees are accustomed to treat their kings like cyphers, and to do and dispose of every thing according to their fancy. This the queen will by no means permit, however the king might, which makes them raise as many obstacles as they can in the way of all business.

“ The french faction, from which we have the most to apprehend, and which is indeed the most active, and I believe the most powerful, because it fills the principal offices of state, has the cardinal del Giudice at its head. Whether he really continues in that interest, as he certainly was before the death of the late king of France, or whether he espouses the party from ill will to us, I cannot determine. It is not, however, surprising, that he should be a zealous enemy of our's in general, and of mine in particular, considering the figure we have reduced him to make, in consequence of the late treaties.

“ Finding his power decrease, this gentleman, by some of his party, prevailed on the king to name a committee from all the councils, at first

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in order to regulate some disputes with France, and now to take cognizance of all foreign affairs under the title of *Junta de dependencias extrangeras*. He has contrived to make himself master of this junta, and it is there that most of our affairs suffer. After they have been favourably determined in the councils, he draws them into this committee, and then he does with them what he pleases. He still sets up for prime minister. Though he has not really power to do any thing, yet he has enough to stop much business, by suggesting objections to the king, who, though a prince of great probity and good natural sense, is startled by the least difficulty, and not easily persuaded to examine it.

“ I have often represented all this to M. Alberoni in the warmest manner, and told him if he does not dissolve this junta, and place himself publicly at the head of affairs, Spain will be ruined; we can never establish that perfect confidence which is so necessary to us both, and I shall be obliged to return with the mortification of having been unable to render the least service to my sovereign. He promises me that the junta shall be broken, and every thing placed on a right footing in a little time; but I can by no means pretend to fix when that time will be.

“ This much I think certain. Without the queen we should never have done any thing here;

and when she desists from supporting our interests, we may take our leave of Spain. I am fully persuaded she is heartily for us now, and a sworn enemy to the french: and I believe his majesty may keep her so as long as he pleases. Thus, though our affairs are much disordered, and hitherto we have obtained nothing but promises; yet it seems to me we have united ourselves to the party which sooner or later must prevail. In a word, the absolute controul over Spain will belong to *the highest bidder for the queen's son*. This is the grand and the only maxim, which has never changed since I have been here."\*


To one of the repeated representations proffered by the british minister of the vexations practised on our merchants, Alberoni replied, "I see it with sorrow, but I cannot remedy it. The malicious servants of the king have sown such secret jealousies of the negotiation, that I have declared to the queen my resolution not to speak any more about business. The greatest sacrifice I can make to you is to represent the complaint again, after which I will say no more. I do not intend to become a trafficker in promises which I cannot fulfil."†

At length the intrigues of Alberoni prevailed

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, June 3 and 15, 1716, NS. Melcombe Papers.

† Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, July 6, 1716.

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over the patience and pertinacity of del Giudice, who, relying on the interest he had acquired with the king; maintained his post in spite of repeated insults and mortifications. The agency of the confessor was therefore now employed to injure him in the mind of Philip, and the jealousy of the queen was roused by the accusation that he endeavoured to prepossess the mind of his royal pupil against her and her children. Accordingly, he was removed from all his ministerial offices, except his place in the council of state; and the charge of governor to the prince was transferred to the duke of Popoli.

The correspondence of the british envoy represents the mode and effects of this change. "You will easily conceive," he wrote to the secretary of state, "that del Giudice is not a man of much resentment, nor indeed of what is becoming his quality and fortune, or he would have thrown up his employ at the notorious slight that was put upon him in the grossest manner, with relation to the late treaty of commerce. . . It set him in the most ridiculous light imaginable, both as first minister, and as particularly deputed to treat that affair, which was the most important of any public one then or since depending, and was concluded while he was declaring that it never could be concluded on those terms. We were in hopes that such mortifying usage would

have prevailed upon him to ask leave to retire ; CHAP. 25.  
which his not having spirit enough to do, has 1716—1717.  
drawn on him this new slight. We shall soon  
see how far the serenity or rather insensibility of  
his temper extends.

“ It is thought a great deal to have brought  
the king thus far, and it is to be hoped he may  
be persuaded further, if the cardinal is resolved  
to stand out. However, it is certain there is so  
much done by removing him from the palace  
that he will scarcely ever see the king but when  
others do. The day after the admission, he  
presented himself at council, and the king did  
not refuse him, though he has since asked leave  
to lay down his post of inquisitor general, and  
retire, which the king has granted him. But as  
he cannot do it without the pope's permission, he  
may protract it as much as he pleases, and possibly  
for some time.”\*

The cardinal was unable to submit to this  
partial disgrace, or discovered that resistance was  
vain. He obtained the papal permission to  
relinquish the only office which he held in Spain,  
and repaired to Rome. The ostensible place of  
minister being thus left vacant, the management  
of public business was diverted into the hands of  
Alberoni and Grimaldo.

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, July 12, N<sup>o</sup>. 1716.

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Still, however, Alberoni did not think proper to assume a public character, and incur the consequent responsibility ; he contented himself with directing the puppets of administration behind the curtain, until he had attained the roman purple, which, besides being a natural object of his ambition as a churchman, gave additional weight to a minister in Spain, and afforded an eventual security in case of disgrace. To this object, therefore, all his views were now directed. He spared neither professions nor promises to acquire the favour of the pontiff, and his instances were supported by earnest and repeated solicitations from the king and queen. While he applied with success to the different members of the roman court, he tendered his assistance to promote an accommodation of the existing disputes between the king and the holy see, and the re-establishment of the nunciature.

As a proof of zeal for the cause of christendom, he induced the king to dispatch a squadron with a force of 8,000 men into the Levant, to assist the venetians against the turks, and by this succour saved Corfu, the key of the Archipelago. In return for this service, and the promises of future aid to the christian cause, he obtained the papal grant of the usual contribution, from the clergy of Spain and the Indies, for the prosecution



of a war against the infidels, the promise of a cardinal's hat, and a plausible pretext for continuing his naval and military preparations.\*

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At this moment, however, he was exposed to a dangerous attack from the regent of France, who could not contemplate with indifference his rising ascendancy, his apparent devotion to England, and the decline of the french influence with the fall of del Giudice. The agent employed on this occasion was Louville, the early favourite and counsellor of Philip, who had been removed from the court under the rule of the princess Orsini. Though the duke of St. Aignan filled the post of regular minister from France, Louville was charged with private credentials to the king, and even with letters of recommendation to Alberoni himself. His ostensible commission was to promote an accommodation with the emperor, as the means of restoring a general peace; but it was evidently expected that the habits of former familiarity would give him sufficient influence over the mind of the king to balance the power of the queen and Alberoni, and re-establish the political connection of the two bourbon courts.

Alberoni, however, was too jealous of the royal favour to give Louville either time or opportunity

\* St. Philippe, t. 2, p. 174—179.

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to fulfil his commission. At the very moment of his arrival, a letter from the secretary of state, Grimaldo, was presented to him, expressing the displeasure and surprise of the king at his presumption in returning to a court from which he had been banished, and enjoining his instant departure. In the midst of the agitation occasioned by this unexpected mandate, he was visited by Alberoni himself, who loaded him with compliments of condolence, lamented his own want of power to prevent such a mortification, and employed all his address to obtain the communication of his instructions. Louville shewing his full powers, and demanding an audience, the wily Italian traversed the apartment with great apparent emotion, exclaiming, "this is a terrible court! people believe that I have power, but I possess none!" In vain Louville expatiated on the danger of offending the court of France; in vain he declared that he was deputed for the purpose of restoring harmony between the two crowns; in vain he persisted in demanding an audience of the king, to disclose the object of his mission. His demands, remonstrances, and expostulations, were all equally fruitless; and, though he was not compelled to depart from the capital, such representations were dispatched to the regent, that orders were sent for his recal

before he could render an account of his unsuccessful embassy.\*

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This attempt on one side, and the disappointment on the other, inflamed the mutual jealousy of both courts, and gave rise to new machinations both at Paris and Madrid. The connections which Louville had formed during his short stay in a discontented capital, and his exaggerated accounts of the public feuds, induced the regent to continue his intrigues through the agency of the accredited ambassador, who was accordingly instructed to embroil the new favourite with the confessor, and to employ his spiritual authority over the mind of Philip. These attempts were however, frustrated, and the failure served only to widen the breach, and to establish the power of the queen and the influence of Alberoni.


Alberoni did not fail to make a merit of this stroke of policy with England, and, in declaring that Spain was totally separated from France, redoubled his instances for an intimate connection between the two countries. He also gave a new proof of his anxiety to gratify the british court, by terminating the long pending discussions relative to the asiento.

In rendering an account of this arrangement, the british minister observes, " Inclosed is the

Aug. 5.

\* Noailles, t. 5, p. 45—55.—Dispatch from Mr. Dodington, to secretary Stanhope, Aug. 5, 1716.

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asiento treaty, signed by the marquis of Bedmar and myself with the catholic king's ratification.

“ On the receipt of Mr. Stanhope's letter, in which I am ordered to renew my instances in the warmest manner, for the execution of the late treaty, as I had so often done it ineffectually to the ministers, I took a resolution of addressing myself directly to the king. Accordingly, on Saturday the 1st, after having communicated it to M. Alberoni, and settled with him some points that might be proper to be introduced, I went to the levée, and desired leave to speak to the king. As soon as he was dressed, he carried me into his closet, where I had the honour to talk to him some time.


“ I took the occasion of giving thanks for the conclusion of the asiento, to express the sense I had of his goodness in having been pleased to make me a means of establishing the confidence between the two crowns, by two treaties of so much importance: that the king, our master, never could be wanting on his side to cultivate it; as I hope he had given his majesty proofs both by his proceedings in Jamaica, and by the communication of his counsels and plans. That the surest basis of that important union, and indeed the only thing which could give both parties force to be reciprocally useful to each other, was the re-establishment of commerce. That I had

the honour to make a treaty wherein his majesty had been pleased to declare his intention to that purpose ; but it was so far from being executed by his officers, that every post brought me complaints of new oppressions. That I endeavoured, indeed, to avoid, as much as possible, importuning his majesty with them, though I received more in a week than I could represent in a month, or than I could get redressed in the councils and tribunals in a year ; for which reason, I entreated his majesty to refer me to his ministers again, if he continued in the same favourable disposition, and to name one in his confidence to execute the treaty. I observed to him how prejudicial the ruin of commerce would be to himself ; and how shocking it would be to the king, our master, after having given and received so many marks of friendship, to see, that instead of redressing the old grievances, as was agreed on by the treaty, new ones were daily imposed.

“ What his majesty said was, in substance, that he should be glad to give new marks of his friendship to the king, and it was his intention that the treaty should be punctually observed.

“ I replied : Since you have pleased, sire, to express yourself so obligingly on that head, I hope you are satisfied with what has been done, as your majesty was thoroughly acquainted with every step which has been taken, and well knows

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that I have in all these affairs applied to M<sup>r</sup> Alberoni alone. Indeed, without him I have reason to fear that your majesty's good intentions would have been rendered fruitless by those who were jealous of the union which they saw growing up between the king and your majesty. Nor can I sufficiently commend the choice of so faithful a minister, and so proper for those affairs, by the great esteem which he has acquired in England, and the personal value our ministers have for him. If your majesty should think fit to honour him with orders to put the treaty in execution, I flatter myself, that from his zeal for the common interest, he will settle it to the advantage of both crowns, though either by him, or by any other way that your majesty shall please to complete so good a work, I shall always receive and obey your orders with the greatest respect and submission.

“ After his majesty had been pleased to express his personal satisfaction at my way of proceeding, in a very obliging manner, he told me that he would give the necessary orders for the execution of the treaty. On this I retired.

“ I should not indeed have ventured to meddle with their councils, or the choice of their ministers, had I not been sure that if affairs were put into any hands but Alberoni's, it would be impossible to do any thing; and having agreed

with him, and being sure of the queen, I thought it could not succeed very ill.

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“ I heard no more of this till Alberoni sent for me. After some discourse about the payment of the asiento, where Monteleon has been pleased to treat some difficulties, he said to me : the queen has spoken to the king and me about what passed between his majesty and you. He seems mightily pleased with what you said to him. His majesty told me he never had designed to put that negotiation into any other hands than mine. He is very desirous that it shall be finished, and has ordered me to examine into it, and settle it in the best manner I can, independently of every body. You, at the same time, must know, that a regulation of that nature is what I do not understand. I am, however, willing to enter upon it, and do what I can, if you will inform me what is to be done, and what is the best way of doing it.”

It, however, appears that, notwithstanding these professions, little or no progress was made in this arrangement.


“ By the inclosed state of the councils, you will see the confusion and difficulties that every trifle meets with.

Aug. 29.

“ I am ashamed to beg his royal highness\* to

\* The king being at Hanover, the prince of Wales was now at the head of the regency.

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believe that I use all possible applications to advance our affairs here, considering the little progress I make in them. But till the king of Spain will publicly set some man at the head of the ministry, with sufficient authority to act vigorously, and to go to the bottom of the present disorders, I can hardly think we shall be able to root out entirely the difficulties under which we lie. For, while every council, and indeed every body in the public employments, out of ignorance, want of application, or malice, perpetually frustrate and perplex every thing that passes through their hands, it seems to me that we cannot settle our affairs advantageously, otherwise than by some man, who has capacity and power to see and put in execution what is just and reasonable wherever he finds it. So that, instead of employing myself about the affairs themselves, I am labouring to get somebody named who will be able to treat and settle them independent of any body else."

Philip had scarcely recovered from the chagrin occasioned by the treaty which England had concluded with the emperor, than he received the still more mortifying intelligence of her alliance with France, and the unexpected union and friendship of George the first and the regent. He was equally irritated at the conclusion of a treaty, which not only cut off his darling




hopes of succeeding to the throne of France, should the infant king die, but precluded him from the prospect of securing the regency, or even of interfering with the government.

Of too irritable a temper to conceal his indignation, Philip gave vent to his resentment against the english, whom he designated as the perpetual enemies of the House of Bourbon, for presuming to decide the question relative to the right of succession in France, which exclusively belonged to the states of the realm. He inveighed against the partiality and injustice of the allies, in requiring him to abide by the strict terms of the treaty of Utrecht, while they permitted the archduke, as he contemptuously called the emperor, to usurp the title, and exercise the functions of king of Spain. His indignation was aggravated by his suspicions of the secret promise made by France and England to assist the emperor in procuring the exchange of Sardinia for Sicily. This arrangement he justly considered as a glaring infraction of the treaty of Utrecht, which had precluded the alienation of Sicily, by entailing it on the spanish crown, should the issue of Victor Amadeus become extinct.

The queen was no less indignant at the prospect of such an accession of power to the House of Austria, as would render the emperor

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arbiter of Italy, and retard, if not prevent, her expected succession to Parma and Tuscany.

Alberoni fully participated in the resentment and mortification of the king and queen; but the same motive as on the former occasion, induced him to suppress his emotions. He was still unwilling to renounce the hope of detaching England from France; and employed all his address to prevent a hasty resolution. While he soothed the king and queen, he renewed his appeals to the british government, dwelt on the embarrassments of his situation, insulted by the king, and reprobated by his patroness, on whom depended his present favour, and future hopes. He repeated his overtures for an union, and continued to urge, that by the late arrangement with England, his sovereign had irreconcilably offended the regent, and broken with France.

Oct. 5.

At his suggestion, even the king and queen vanquished their resentment, and assumed a tone of friendship and confidence, hitherto unknown in the intercourse between the Houses of Bourbon and Brunswick. "Tuesday the 29th," writes the minister, "I had my public audience. The king received me with extreme kindness, and in return to my compliment, talked longer than I ever saw him do to any body on such occasions. The queen seemed to be mightily satisfied with

my expressions of his majesty's esteem, and behaved herself in so obliging a manner, all the while I had the honour to speak to her, that every body took notice of the satisfaction she was pleased to express in her looks and actions. She made me a very obliging answer, with all possible assurances of her esteem for his majesty, and her desire to preserve his friendship. Her majesty was pleased to do me a particular honour, in giving me audience without making me wait her return from mass, contrary to her constant practice. The next morning Alberoni came to see me, and gave me abundance of assurances of the king's good intentions, and his own friendship. God send that I may see the effects of the one and the other."

Speaking of Alberoni in a subsequent dispatch, he observes, " Though I can do very little with him, I should do nothing without him. As to the settling of our commerce, I have strong promises that it shall be done. Alberoni protests to me, that which he does not do, he cannot do; and that the whole ministry unanimously do all they can to perplex and frustrate every thing he undertakes, both by themselves and friends, and I believe him. He hopes shortly to break through them, and pretends that we shall have justice and favour, and that he will protect our commerce in every thing. I fear he will not be able to act

Nov. 19.

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openly and with authority till he has the character from Rome, which is stopped by some little difficulties."

Nov. 30.

"If Alberoni was openly at the head of affairs, I should expect effects instead of promises. As it is, I must be contented with promises; for either he cannot, or will not put his promises in execution at present. If he cannot, which I believe to be the case, it is more reasonable that we should have patience; if he will not, it is much the same, since he has always the excuse of want of power, not being publicly declared minister."

Dec. 21.

"It is a delicate thing to press people that are not yet charged with affairs in any public station; and consequently not obliged to engage themselves further than they have a mind to do, out of complaisance. The truth is, the unsettledness and disorder in this administration are so great, that it is as difficult and tedious to bring about the most trifling things, as those of the utmost consequence. The delays are such and so unseasonable, that though I have neglected nothing in my power to shorten them; yet it were unreasonable to expect that any body else should think so. It is a little more excusable in considering the present situation of this court."

Dec. 28.

"Since the dismissal of the cardinal del Giudice, the public ministers have nobody dele-

gated to treat with them. It always used to be a counsellor of state. We have nobody to apply to openly, but Grimaldo, as the king's secretary, who has no apparent power, is no minister of state, nor has any voice in the council. Alberoni, who has the power, is in no public situation, and is to be seen and applied to, only when, and by those that he thinks proper. So that those to whom we can always apply have not the authority, and those who have the authority are not to be engaged further than they themselves please, besides numberless other inconveniences, which must result from such a mode of treating. This I fear cannot be thoroughly redressed, till the disputes are wholly made up with Rome."\*

"Last Thursday I saw Alberoni, and represented to him our difficulties and the causes from whence I imagined they proceeded. He told me he was sensible we had suffered much and long, and I might believe he had done so too. That I knew very well he had once resolved to meddle no more with affairs; but now in a little time he should be freed from those difficulties; I might be sure he would then take all occasions that lay in his power to redress ours. In a week's time he believed the alterations in the ministry would be ended, and then he would use

Jan. 25,  
1717.

\* Alluding to the nomination of Alberoni as cardinal.


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his best endeavours ; and it should not be long ere we found the good effects of his hearty desire to serve us. In effect, considering the present situation of our affairs, I do firmly believe that sooner or later they will be regulated to our mutual satisfaction. I shall not pretend to fix the time ; but on the whole, they cannot fail of coming to a final and advantageous settlement."

Jan. 11,  
1717.


At length some partial changes were made in the administration, which tended to increase the power of Alberoni, and to give him a superiority in the departments of finance and the Indies.

In alluding to these circumstances, Mr. Dondington observes, " I am of opinion that there will be more changes, and in the mean time the fear of them puts a stop to business. My reason for appearing desirous to promote these alterations, has been to have the ministers reduced to some sort of regular dependence on one another. For, as it is, there is little confidence between them and Alberoni. He will not permit them to do every thing they have a mind to do by their own authority, and what he designs doing, being to be dispatched through their hands, they endeavour to perplex and obstruct it as much as they can ; all which subjects every thing to a perpetual intricacy and confusion. I pray God we may see the end of it by any means."

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But it was not by removing the ostensible members of administration, or substituting one puppet for another, that Alberoni gained a real accession of strength. Spanish ministers, even if appointed by his influence, soon became hostile to the controul of an upstart foreigner; and directly or indirectly opposed the measures which tended to annul long existing customs, or to eradicate abuses sanctioned by time. Alberoni therefore introduced an essential change into the mode of conducting the business of each department, which threw the whole power into his hands, and rendered him the sole depositary of the royal confidence, and the chief organ of the royal will. Besides reducing and modifying the councils, to the exclusion of those members whose talents and influence he dreaded, and the advancement of those who favoured his views, he obtained from the king, under the pretence of maintaining the requisite secrecy, an order enjoining the foreign ministers, not to address their correspondence through the public channel, called *Via de Estado*, but, by the private mode of communication called the *Reservada*, directly to the royal cabinet, by which means he became the immediate agent of the sovereign with foreign powers.

Although he could not overcome the king's

CHAP. 25.  partiality to Grimaldo, and was compelled to leave him in the office of secretary for foreign affairs; yet he reduced him to the situation of a mere clerk, and transferred the secretaryship of war to a dependent, Don Michael Fernandez Duran, marquis of Tolosa.\*

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 194—405.



CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

1717.

*Hesitation of the dutch to join in the triple alliance—Proposals of reconciliation made to Spain and the emperor—Conferences of the british minister on the offer of Parma, Placentia, and Tuscany—Arrest of the spanish inquisitor general, by the austrian governor of Milan—Indignation of Philip—Fruitless attempts of Alberoni to prevent a rupture—Letter to the duke of Popoli—Obtains the sanction of the council of state for the commencement of hostilities.*

**N**OTWITHSTANDING the reconciliation between England and France, and the union of England with the united provinces, the leading members of the dutch government deprecated hostilities with Spain; and Beretti Landi, spanish ambassador at the Hague, retarded the accession of the states to the recent treaty, which was to form the triple alliance, till the commencement of 1717.

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The triple alliance was, however, no sooner consolidated, than the contracting powers directed their efforts to prevent a rupture, by mediating an accommodation which was calculated to favour the interests of both parties. The emperor was already gained by the promised exchange of

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Sicily ; and it was hoped that the king, or at least the queen of Spain, would be gratified with the reversion of Tuscany and Parma. But when this proposal was brought forward, Philip disappointed their expectations by declining a distant and uncertain compensation for present and positive pretensions ; particularly as he well knew that this reversion, however distant and uncertain, must be the price of his consent to the transfer of Sicily to the emperor ; a virtual renunciation of all his hopes to restore the spanish power in Italy. A dispatch from Mr. Dodington to the secretary of state, contains the cold and repulsive answer given to a proposition, which it was hoped would have been received with alacrity.

April 12.

“ M. Alberoni sent me a billet this morning, desiring me to come and see him at the palace, where he talked a great deal to me about the overture of accommodation, that his majesty has been pleased to make between this court and that of Vienna. He desired me to assure his majesty, in the king of Spain's name, that he was very much obliged by his good intentions to favour him on the occasion. He told me M. de Beretti Landi had acquainted him with the discourse which Mr. Stanhope held with him on that subject at the Hague. That he had given him for answer, from the king of Spain, he had never thought of

coming to an accommodation by the interposition of the pope. If he had any thought of an accommodation, he would certainly have desired to owe it to the good offices of the king our master, whom he regarded as his very good friend. That he loved quiet and tranquillity, and should never be averse to make all reasonable steps to procure them, and re-establish the balance of Europe.

“ He afterwards spoke of the proposals that had been made concerning the states of Tuscany and Parma. The king, he said, did not look upon them to be sufficient to establish a balance, though they were even to be yielded up by treaty to one of the queen’s children ; for while the emperor was so strong in Italy, he would always be the master to keep his word or not ; and a thousand occasions might happen in time, which might incline him to break it. Further, that by this the king would be obliged to renounce for ever *all his just pretensions in Italy, which he might make good on a proper occasion*, and for the sake of rights, which might perhaps never, or late, fall into his hands ; (there still surviving three in one house, and two in the other) and even when they should fall, might not be faithfully preserved, there being but a simple verbal promise in his favour, and the other party having all the strength. Indeed, if the king was per-

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mitted to put garrisons into the places where there are any at present in these states, till the accomplishment of the treaty, it was an affair which might be entered upon. But if he could have only verbal assurances, he would rather leave things as they are, and endeavour to find *occasions to make good his pretensions in Italy, as time might serve*, since the worst would be to see the emperor the master, which might well happen, notwithstanding the treaty in question, and *his rights would be yielded up besides*. It is not, said M. Alberoni, that the king does not very much regard his britannic majesty's guaranty, and even will not make any treaty with any one without it; but he believes that in the present affair, the emperor may put himself in possession before his majesty or himself can be capable of making any opposition."\*

Meanwhile the hostile preparations were actively continued. The prospect of a war, as well as the rigorous reforms in the internal administration, and the national aversion to a foreign domination, created such discontents, that the court thought proper to apply to England for permission to raise 3,000 irish troops, which might be employed to curb the capital.

June 7.

"I have only touched," writes the british envoy, in making the proposition, "upon what

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Methuen, April 12, N. S. 1717.

M. Alberoni said to me about the 3,000 men, in my letter to Mr. Secretary Addison, and I should not have mentioned it had I not been compelled, because I comprehend that his majesty has no mind to grant the favour. It is certain it would be looked upon as the greatest favour imaginable, and a couple of regiments only, to shew his majesty's inclination to oblige the king, would be highly esteemed. The reason which makes them so very pressing on this head ; (for I have been perpetually tormented with it) is, because it is extremely necessary, there being great dissatisfaction here among the people. They have so far disobliged the walloon guards, that they cannot very well reckon on them, and they would have a body of men entirely at their devotion, who have no habitation in the country, in case of an accident."\*

Disappointed in the hope of preventing the union of France and the maritime powers, and foiled in the different attempts to create a breach in the alliance, Alberoni was more anxious to defer an open rupture, and endeavoured to persuade the king to temporise till he had prepared a fleet and army to give weight to his pretensions. Possibly he might again have overruled the inclinations of Philip ; but, an un-

\* Mr. Dodington to secretary Stanhope, June 7, N. S. 1717, private.

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expected incident baffled his efforts, and prematurely hurried on a war.

Don Joseph Molines, spanish ambassador at Rome, was appointed grand inquisitor in the place of the cardinal del Giudice. In returning through Italy to take possession of his office, he traversed a part of the Milanese, on the faith of a papal safe conduct, and the promise of the imperial ambassador. He was, however, arrested by the austrian governor, and confined in the castle of Milan, and his papers being seized, were transmitted to Vienna, with the expectation that they would furnish intelligence relative to the designs of the spanish court.

This insult from a prince, against whom so many motives of complaint existed, roused the highest resentment in the punctilious and vindictive mind of Philip. Without reflecting on the imperfect state of his preparations, or the impolicy of drawing on himself the whole force of Europe, he determined to avenge this injury to his own person in that of his minister, and to vindicate the honour of his crown.

Alberoni was thus reduced to the most embarrassing dilemma. He had in vain laboured to obtain the support or even the connivance of England; he had been equally disappointed by Holland; contrary to his expectation he saw even France united with the maritime powers and the

emperor, to guaranty the austrian possessions, and the succession of the two crowns of France and England as established by the peace of Utrecht. Spain was without an ally, or even the hope of assistance, except from the weak and distant diversion of the turks, or the desultory efforts of the rebels in Hungary, and the faint prospect of co-operation from the northern powers. The navy was yet only in embryo; the reforms and changes, in the army and administration, too recent to be efficient. A formidable party in the kingdom opposing or thwarting all his measures, himself without public authority, relying only on the support of the queen, and directing the helm of state under the sanction of temporary and occasional mandates.

Seeing the danger both to the country and himself, should he engage in a war thus unprepared and unsupported, he called forth all his address and talents to defer a rupture. His efforts and arguments made but a faint impression on his indignant master, whose impotent resentment, and passion for grand enterprises, were not curbed by the calculations of ordinary prudence. Nor were his applications to the queen more availing, for though his remonstrances frequently extorted tears,\* yet her lofty spirit, or zeal for

\* Account of Ripperda, by the sicilian abbots, MS.

CHAP. 26. the glory of her husband, rendered her equally  
 1717. untractable.



Indignant at this procrastination, and desirous to oppose the judgment of a person of consequence to that of the minister, Philip wrote a letter, demanding the opinion of the duke of Popoli, who, besides sharing the royal confidence, was distinguished for his rank and employments, and possessed considerable influence among the nobles. The duke, penetrating the wish of the king, like an adroit courtier, gave his opinion in favour of war, and after inveighing against the conduct of the emperor, detailed many arguments to prove that the resources of Spain were equal to the contest. From his own local connections, he recommended the invasion of Naples.

Satisfied with this confirmation of his opinion, the king sent the letter to Alberoni, as a decisive answer to all his arguments. In return Alberoni had recourse to a similar expedient in his own defence; he profited by the opportunity to address a letter to the duke, enforcing his opinion in stronger terms than he could have employed towards the sovereign himself.

June 10. "The king, my master," he said, "has put into my hand your excellency's letter, on a matter which fills me with horror and consterna-



tion : as in my poor judgment, should it take place, it would ruin this poor exhausted country, which cannot recover without the benefit of a long peace."

After stating the question whether the arrest of Molines was an infraction of the neutrality of Italy, and even admitting the affirmative, he proceeds:

" But with what force, with what treasure can the catholic king attempt to invade the kingdom of Naples ? For even granting that the treasury contains two millions of dollars ; that we have another fleet, transports, provisions, ammunition, artillery ; granting that it reaches Naples, that the whole country declares in favour of the king, that the fortresses surrender ; who is the person that can answer for the maintenance of the conquest ? All these requisites, however, are not yet there. Let the duke of Popoli state how much time is necessary to collect them ? Is your excellency ignorant that two months would be required for an expedition to Majorca ? So long a time then being necessary for such preparations, the squadron destined for this glorious enterprise must be left in the port of Cadiz or Barcelona to rot in inactivity, to the shame and scandal of the world.

" Consider, my lord duke, that before the declaration of war against the turks, the archduke

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obtained through the pope the assurance that the king of Spain would not attack his italian dominions. Can the king consider the arrest of Molines as an infraction of the neutrality, and in consequence as a motive to recal his promise? My lord duke, according to the guaranty of the maritime powers and France, no hostilities were to take place in Italy, nor any change in the existing possessions. Now reprisals, whether they happen or not, cannot be regarded as acts of hostility between two powers already at enmity.


“ Supposing then that our troops effect a landing, and take possession of the kingdom, this very success will be desirable to the germans; because it will furnish them with a reason to carry into execution those vast designs which might be opposed, should they be attempted without a motive. Doubtless then, on the first intelligence of the invasion the court of Vienna will hasten a peace with the turks, or suddenly providing for defence, will be able to dispatch a detachment of 18,000 men into Italy, and instantly occupy the states of Parma, Placentia, and Tuscany. Supposing, however, a successful debarkation and peaceable occupation of the kingdom, it will still be necessary to keep the fleet at Naples, and all the vessels ready for transport, otherwise the king might be unable to withdraw his troops.

“ What will the dutch say to see such an attempt at the time when they appear willing to form a league with Spain, and reconcile the king with the archduke? What will France say, who offers to induce the maritime powers to secure for Don Carlos the states of Parma, Placentia, and Tuscany? What will England say, who knows and promotes such arrangements? Oh, my lord duke, these are wild ideas, thus to involve two young and innocent sovereigns in the utmost distress! In a word, this is leading the world to imagine that a *few mad italians*, from attachment to their native country, have urged the king to the extermination and ruin of Spain.

“ Without allies the catholic king cannot hope to conquer Italy, particularly at a time when he has neither troops nor money, nor able commanders. With three kingdoms\* more disaffected than ever, with a people enraged, with a nobility discontented, finally deprived of all human help; in this state we are not able, according to your excellency’s phrase, to oppose force to force. Lastly, in such an important affair, I want the courage of your excellency to say, or think, that notwithstanding so many difficulties we should throw ourselves into the hands of Providence, and trust to the justice of our cause. This I declared to their majesties, on the first word with

\* Catalonia, Valencia, and Aragon.

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which they honoured me on the subject; and I should be most gratified, even were the enterprise attended with the most happy result, that the world should know, my weak judgment did not approve it. I request your excellency to receive these my crude sentiments, written in haste, to peruse and return them, observing this religious secret, confided to your honour and probity, with the protest, *salvo saniori judicio*.”\*

This masterly composition, which remains a monument of the judgment, foresight, and policy of Alberoni, made a deep impression on the duke of Popoli. He had the candour to address a new letter to the king, revoking his former opinion as crude and imprudent, and deprecating the premature commencement of hostilities. This opinion he adroitly sanctioned by contriving to communicate at the same time the letter of Alberoni, which he described as the cause of his change of sentiment.

Philip accordingly sent the confessor, d'Aubenton, with the letter, to Alberoni himself, to demand whether he acknowledged this paper which had fallen into his hands, and probably with the hope that fear would induce him to disavow it. But the minister was superior to such weakness. He boldly owned the letter; he expressed his satisfaction that it had reached the

\* Storia del Cardinale Alberoni, P. 2, p. 152.

royal eye, and declared that he was too zealously attached to the honour and interest of his royal master, to revoke an opinion founded on such irrefragable principles. This declaration he induced d'Aubenton to indorse on the letter itself, though at the moment of subscribing it, the confessor observed, " I decide for war, and I must candidly inform you, that your refusal will exasperate the king, and may expose you to disgrace."

Still, however, Alberoni continued to combat the obstinacy of the king, with almost equal perseverance. He urged the impracticability of an attempt on Naples, represented that the season was too far advanced for the invasion of Sardinia, and recommended an attack on the infidels, or a descent on the coast of Africa, as conformable to the promise pledged to the pope, as an enterprise of more easy execution, and more suitable to the honour of the crown, and the interests of Spain.\*

\* It is singular that almost every writer, whether domestic or foreign, has accused Alberoni as the *only* cause of the aggression, and St. Philippe, whose judgment, in other instances, we have found reason to approve, considers the correspondence through the duke of Popoli as a mere political farce. We feel it, however, necessary, to differ from such respectable authorities. The characters of Philip and his queen, as drawn by those who most accurately observed them, shew that they wanted no foreign stimulus to excite their ambition; while the situation of the two courts of Madrid and Vienna, and the known reluctance with which Philip abandoned Italy, render it as little necessary to argue, that Alberoni was not the original projector, but merely the able executor of their hostile designs. We may refer to the very letter of the

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The positive injunctions of Philip over-ruling all objections, Alberoni was too apprehensive of the event to incur the heavy responsibility which was annexed to the enterprise; and, submitting the question to the council of state, obtained the sanction of its vote for war.

minister himself, which we have given in the text, and appeal with confidence to every impartial judge, whether it was possible to use such cogent arguments, without feeling their force, and as a mere blind to the purpose which he was determined to execute.

The two sicilian abbots, Platania and Carraccioli, who possessed the most accurate knowledge of the court and cabinet, exculpate Alberoni from the charge of being instigator and prime mover of war. The whole correspondence of the British envoy, Mr. Doddington, who was in almost daily intercourse with this great statesman, evinces his anxiety to avert a rupture in the early stages of the dispute. The mighty preparations, yet only commenced in Spain, as well as the imperfect state in which the expeditions both against Sardinia and Sicily were sent out, fully demonstrate, that it was his interest rather to temporise than to hurry into a war. Lastly, to these decisive proofs, we may add his own solemn, invariable, and frequent asseverations, both in public and private, both during his ministry, and after his fall, and the virtual acknowledgement in the Answer to his celebrated Apology, which reluctantly admits his justification that he was not the author of the war. *Storia del Cardinale Alberoni*, P. 11, p. 146—158.—Apology for Alberoni in the same work.—Translations in the *Historical Register for 1722*.—*St. Philippe*, t. 3, p. 197—200.—*Ortiz*, t. 7, l. 23, c. 2.—*Desormeaux*, t. 5, p. 330—340.—*Noailles*, t. 5, p. 74.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

1717.

*Hostile preparations in the eastern ports of Spain—Promotion of Alberoni to the dignity of cardinal—Departure of the spanish expedition against Sardinia—Attempts of Alberoni to amuse the courts of England and France—Invasion and conquest of Sardinia—Justification of Spain—Alarms and preparations of England and France—Overtures of accommodation made to Spain—Preparations for a new expedition—Mission of Mr. Stanhope to Madrid, to propose overtures of accommodation—England finally overcomes the lukewarmness of France and Holland—Conferences of the british ministers with Alberoni on the subject of the overtures—The spanish court affects to accept the proffered terms—Illness and recovery of the king—Unpopularity of Alberoni—Anecdote relative to his ludicrous squabble with the duke of Escalona.*

**THOUGH** reluctant to engage in hostilities, Alberoni was no sooner convinced that war was inevitable, than he pressed the requisite preparations with equal zeal and alacrity. He was, however, too anxious to secure the roman purple, the primary object of his personal ambition, to omit any effort for its attainment, before he risked the displeasure of the pope by a breach of his solemn and repeated promises. But it was no easy matter to overcome the indecision of the roman court; where the wishes of Philip and the personal credit of the minister were opposed

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CHAP. 27. by the influence of the emperor, and the intrigues  
1717. of del Giudice, who did not neglect so favourable  
an opportunity to retaliate for his past mortifications. This delay of the pope, combined with the displeasure testified by the king for the opposition of Alberoni to the war, was hailed by his numerous enemies as a certain signal of his approaching disgrace.\*

Nothing therefore but a stroke of authority could relieve Alberoni from this embarrassing situation ; and this resource he did not hesitate to employ. Notwithstanding the reconciliation with Rome was finally settled, and the new nuntio had advanced as far as Perpignan,† a prohibition was issued, suspending his entry into Spain ; while a messenger was dispatched to Rome with the hint that the long expected honour must be the price of the reconciliation. To counterbalance the representations of the imperial partisans, this message was accompanied with a declaration, that the preparations of Spain were not directed against the emperor, and with a renewal of his promises to prosecute the war against the infidels.

So decisive a mode of negotiating vanquished the hesitation of the pontiff, who was as little inclined to relinquish the advantages of a reconciliation with Spain as Alberoni to lose the

\*. Noailles, t. 5, p. 70.

† Dodington's dispatches.



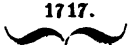
cardinal's hat. He therefore signified his compliance. The nuntio was received in Spain; and in a solemn consistory the pontiff announced the nomination of Alberoni, with a pompous eulogium of his character and services. He added the declaration that he could not resist the instances of the king and queen of Spain, who had testified more solicitude for this promotion than had ever before been shewn even for a prince of the blood. In vain del Giudice vehemently harangued against the person and administration of the new cardinal; his eloquence made no impression, and on the 10th of July, the usual messenger carried the welcome tidings to Madrid.\*

The intelligence of this promotion was the signal for the execution of the enterprise. While all Europe was held in suspense; while England apprehended a new invasion in favour of the pretender; the emperor trembled for Naples; Victor Amadeus for Sicily, and the genoese for their own coasts; while the pope anticipated a decisive blow against the infidels, and while the capital and kingdom were occupied with rumours and conjectures which only tended to increase the general uncertainty; Don Joseph Patiño, the friend and confidant of the minister, was dis-

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 200.

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patched to Barcelona, bearing the final orders for the departure of the expedition.\*

At this moment Alberoni redoubled his wiles, as if to gain yet a trifling interval of suspense, or as a final effort to sow divisions among the allies. From the correspondence of the british envoy, we find that he adroitly contrived again to bring forward the question of commercial regulations, and again lavished his promises to redress the grievances of our merchants, and cultivate the friendship of England. Still, however, he clogged his promises with his usual pretexts for delay, particularly the pressure of his own occupations, and the absence of Patiño, the only person competent to the arrangement of so difficult a point.

Aug. 9.

Aug. 30.

To the customary application, relative to the object of the armament, he gave no specific answer until it was ready to sail. Then with an air of affected candour, as if yielding to the pressing instances of the envoy, he confessed that it was intended against the emperor, though without affording the slightest hint relative to its specific destination. He concluded with the observation, "I have no part in this enterprise, except the execution; and, I do assure you, that I have strongly represented to the king, both in

\* Dodington's dispatch.

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writing and discourse, the inconveniences which will follow it. But the king is determined, and all my arguments have failed to dissuade him." This mixture of candour and dissimulation made the expected impression; for the envoy, in transmitting the intelligence to his court, betrays a conviction by no means faint, of the sincerity of his professions, and testifies a hope that his promises would ultimately be fulfilled.\*

At the moment when he thus cajoled the english, with regard to their commerce, Alberoni made an overture which appeared equally calculated to produce an effect on the french court. To the french ambassador he observed, "It is the general opinion that Spain can do nothing of herself; yet her preparations alarm the world. What would have been the consequence, if the king had followed my advice to remain quiet some years, and apply himself to the restoration of his finances?" To the answer of the ambassador, that such conduct would have been worthy of a great minister, and no less conformable to the wishes of France, than to the interests of Spain, he replied, by insisting on the necessity of an union between the two bourbon crowns. "The king of Spain," he continued, "is only interested to conciliate France; and, therefore, I

Aug. 17.

\* Mr. Dodington to Mr. Secretary Addison, Aug. 9 and 30, 1717.

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am not anxious to receive proposals from other quarters. The king of England, for instance, has long solicited us to make peace with the emperor, and offered his mediation; yet, to his utter astonishment, we shall cut him out work elsewhere." At the same time, he offered to accept the mediation of France, provided the liberty of Italy and the pretensions of the queen were secured.\*

To gratify the spaniards, as well as to sow jealousies between France and the maritime powers, he caused rumours to be circulated that the object of the armament had been secretly communicated to the regent, and that there was no doubt of his seizing the first favourable opportunity of declaring for Spain.

Aug. 2.


Meanwhile the armament, which had occupied the attention of Europe, departed from Barcelona in two divisions, forming a force of twelve ships of war, and 9,000 men; commanded by the marquis of Lede. The first soon shewed the object of the enterprise, by appearing in the bay of Cagliari; but contrary winds delayed the second for twenty days. Had not this delay occurred, Cagliari must have fallen without resistance, and the conquest of the island would have been instantly effected; but the unforeseen delay gave time to the austrian governor, the

\* Noailles, t. 5, p. 74—75.

marquis of Rubi, to prepare for defence. The works were strengthened, the artillery mounted on the ramparts, and the garrison reinforced with a body of militia and catalans in the austrian pay ; the posts in the interior were also fortified and guarded by the native troops, or by those who volunteered their service for their austrian sovereign.

The summons of the spanish commander being rejected, a force of 6,000 infantry, and 600 cavalry, was disembarked, the garrison were driven within their walls, and the greater part of the neighbouring country declared for Philip. The intemperance of the season, the scanty supply of fresh water, and the want of requisites for a siege, enabled the governor to protract the defence of the capital ; and when, at length, further resistance was hopeless, he made his escape into the upper district, to maintain the austrian cause, while a foot of ground remained to defend. On his departure, the garrison surrendered ; but the reduction of the capital and the neighbouring districts did not ensure the possession of the whole island ; for the strong posts of Castel Aragonés and Alguér still remained, and the spanish army had yet to traverse a country of 40 leagues in extent, harrassed by the active mountaineers, and exposed to the

CHAP. 27. pestilential air in the midst of the autumnal  
1717. heats.



Alguer was first attacked, and, though the garrison was reinforced by means of small vessels from the coast of Naples, was compelled to surrender on the 28th of October. The reduction of Castel Aragonés, as well as the conquest of the whole island, was not completed before the beginning of November. A general amnesty being then proclaimed, many of the austrian partisans, among whom was the archbishop of Surfari, profited by the usual permission granted to those who chose to quit the island. As the season was too far advanced to commence any further enterprise, if any was yet intended against Naples, the marquis of Lede left 5,000 men to maintain his conquest, and with the remainder, exhausted by fatigue and sickness, returned to Barcelona.\*

Philip was highly gratified with the recovery of an island which once belonged to the crown of Spain, and the successful commencement of his long meditated hostilities against the emperor. Te Deum was publicly performed, the capital illuminated, and every testimony of national triumph displayed. But Alberoni did not parti-

\* Dodington's dispatches.—St. Philippe, t. 4.—Ibid. t. 3, p. 208—228.—Historical Register for 1717, p. 388, &c.

cipate in these feelings of exultation. To gratify the sovereign, he assumed in public the tone and appearance of satisfaction; yet in private he lamented the obstinacy of his royal master, in hurrying into hostilities before his preparations were fully matured for the attainment of a more valuable object than the possession of a barren island. The blow was, however, struck, and it was necessary to justify the aggression; but the language of this justification sufficiently bespeaks the embarrassment of the minister. According to his direction, the marquis of Grimaldo, as secretary of state, issued a circular letter to the ministers of Spain in foreign courts, containing the principal arguments which they were to employ in vindicating the conduct of their sovereign. In this curious document, the secretary virtually throws the blame on the king, as the prime mover of the enterprise, by avowing his own ignorance of its object, and his surprise when it was carried into execution. He proceeds, however, with a laboured detail of the insults, provocations, and injuries which Spain had experienced from the emperor. He recapitulates the various infractions of the most solemn engagements by the austrian court, from the peace of Utrecht till the moment of the rupture, and he sums up his series of accusations and grievances, with expatiating on the arrest of

CHAP. 27. **Mohnez, as a glaring breach of the neutrality of Italy, and sufficient cause for the declaration of hostilities.\***

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The emperor was indignant at this invasion of his dominions, at the time when he was engaged in war against the infidels, and in violation of the solemn promise which the king of Spain had pledged to the pope. He appealed to the members of the triple alliance to fulfil their guaranty, by protecting him against this unmerited aggression; he called on the pope to justify himself against the suspicion of connivance, by breaking off his connection with Spain, recalling his nuntio, annulling the grant of the tax on ecclesiastical property, as unjustly obtained, and depriving Alberoni of the purple. In case of refusal, he menaced the roman see with the loss of Benevento.

However anxious for the reduction of the austrian power in Italy, the pope could not fail to feel high resentment at the deception practised on him in the face of Europe. He therefore solemnly vindicated himself against the imputation of connivance; and addressed a brief to the court of Madrid in language which marks the poignancy of his feelings. He accompanied this

\* Rousset, t. 1, & 2, passim.—Ortiz, t. 7, p. 307.—Tindal, v. 19, p. 166.—In the Historical Register for 1717, p. 376, the reader will likewise find various documents on this subject.



appeal by suspending the further perception of the ecclesiastical tax.

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Though the nuntio was ordered to enforce the contents of the brief with his personal representations, and though it was publicly circulated in Spain, as well as in every other country of Europe; yet Alberoni contrived to prevent its formal presentation; and the only notice taken of this appeal by so high an authority was the contemptuous observation of Philip, "I have seen a letter said to be written by the pope, but it is a clumsy forgery; for it is impossible that his holiness can employ such language, so abusive, and so unworthy of the father of christendom.\*"

The reduction of Sardinia was rather a deviation from the projects of the minister, than a part of the original plan; and principally intended to suspend the arrangements for the transfer of Sicily, which was one of the primary objects of attack. Alberoni therefore now called forth all his activity, to recover the lost time, and to employ the short interval of suspense occasioned by the advanced season, in accumulating the means for a new expedition. To provide the requisite funds, he made the most rigorous reform in the public establishments, not sparing

\* See this Brief in Ortiz, t. 7, p. 304, and Historical Register for 1717, p. 369.

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even the royal household. He did not hesitate to controul the taste of his royal patroness for buildings and improvements, and to her remonstrances and demands for money, replied, "Your majesty would rather be countess of St. Ildefonso than queen of Spain."\* He continued also the exaction of the ecclesiastical tax, in spite of the papal prohibitions, imprisoning or banishing the refractory priests who defended the privileges of their order. Finally, he recurred to anticipations of the revenue, to an increase of various duties, to impositions on wealthy individuals, and even to the sale of lucrative offices.

The energy of the minister gave a new impulse to every wheel of the state machine. Ships and naval stores were obtained from every maritime nation where they could be purchased, and neutral vessels seized for transports. Metal was procured from Holland; founderies of artillery built at Pampeluna; an activity long unknown was introduced into the armouries of Biscay, and native establishments formed for the fabrication of various articles of naval and military equipment, hitherto drawn from abroad.

The enthusiasm of the towns and provinces was also awakened, by the glory which the recent success had cast over the spanish arms: they not only added to the resources of the government by

\* M. de Villars, t. 2, p. 437.

voluntary contributions, but raised an efficient force of sixteen regiments of infantry and eight of cavalry.

Besides the ordinary means of recruiting, the minister did not hesitate to call forth the assistance of a tribe hitherto the object of suspicion and dread. He found means to allure the miquelets from the mountains of Catalonia and Aragon; and to form six regiments of these desultory bands, of all people the best calculated for irregular warfare, by their vigour, enterprise, and activity, by their dexterity in the use of arms, and their patience of fatigue and hardships, the natural effects of climate and predatory habits of life. A similar force of two regiments was drawn from the hunters of the Sierra Morena.

Meanwhile the allies laboured with the utmost solicitude to prevent a war, by arranging articles of accommodation, which were regarded as favouring the interests of both the rival powers. They expected to satisfy the anxiety of Spain for an establishment in Italy, and to promote an accommodation with the emperor, by flattering the views of the queen on the successions of Parma and Tuscany. In return for this acquisition, it was imagined that Spain would acquiesce in the transfer of Sicily; and the two sovereigns were respectively to renounce, one his pretensions to Spain, the other, those to the dismem-

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bered provinces. To give additional weight to these offers, Mr. Stanhope, the relative of the secretary of state, was dispatched to Madrid.

Contrary, however, to public expectation, the spanish court shewed not the slightest inclination to desist from their designs on Italy; and received every proposal of inferior importance with indifference or contempt; though, in the first instance, the transfer of Sicily was rather mutually understood, than formally proposed. From the correspondence of our two envoys we collect the authentic expressions of the spanish minister.

Oct. 18.

Bitterly inveighing against the imperfect arrangements of the peace of Utrecht, Alberoni exclaimed, " You made war to establish the balance, and you concluded a peace without any balance; you left the emperor in a situation to disturb every moment the public tranquillity of Europe. The king, my master, has no repugnance to propositions of peace; but those propositions must be such as to re-establish, in some measure, the ancient balance, not to leave the emperor in a situation to make himself master of Italy whenever he pleases. Nor will the king of Spain send a minister, until he knows the condition on which he is to treat for an accommodation." To the proposition relative to Parma and Tuscany, he made the same reply as

before, though in less conciliating and guarded language.

Wearied at length with repeated appeals to the neutrality of Italy, and the obligation of the king of England to maintain it, he exclaimed, with that vivacity which was natural to him, "For the successions of Tuscany and Parma the king cares not; such trifles are not worthy the attention of his catholic majesty. All he requires is such an arrangement as may re-establish the balance in Europe, which he considers as incompatible with the power possessed by the emperor in Italy. With regard to the engagements which the allies have taken, it is a well known principle that princes and states are not bound to observe a treaty contrary to their interest. This principle is acknowledged by all religions, whether catholic or protestant. You," he ironically added, "have always acted thus. For instance, did you not acknowledge Philip as king of Spain? Yet soon afterwards finding it to be your interest, did you not endeavour to dethrone him and place another in his room? Nor do I blame you for pursuing your interest as a nation."

After this apostrophe, he adverted to the proposed conditions, which he censured as disadvantageous to Spain, on three principles. First, because the emperor would continue too powerful in Italy, and foment troubles in Spain. Secondly,

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the successions would afford no means to obviate this danger, on account of their distance and uncertainty, and the impossibility of maintaining them against the emperor, if he chose to attack them. Thirdly, because the king could not rely on the proffered guaranty, as he had unfortunately experienced, in the breach of the treaty for the evacuation of Catalonia and Majorca.

Argument and persuasion were in vain employed to obviate the objections of a man determined not to yield. He found also an additional plea for equivocation and delay, in the reluctance and lukewarmness with which the vigorous remonstrances of the british ministers were seconded by their french and dutch colleagues. To the frequent declaration, that the members of the triple alliance must support their guaranty by arms, he as frequently adverted to the silence of the french and dutch governments; he also positively denied that the regent, either by his private correspondence, or through the channel of the regular ambassador, had ever specifically announced a resolution to extort the acquiescence of Philip by force.

Indeed, the reluctant avowal of the ministers themselves proves the embarrassment derived from this want of concert. "We are fully convinced the french ambassador has never signified that the regent would maintain the guaranty of

the neutrality of Italy, except by good offices, or that he would be obliged to send troops into that country, in case the peace should be disturbed by Spain. We have so closely pressed the ambassador on the subject, that he has been obliged to confess he has received no order to adopt this language. So that this point, which would probably be the most effectual to influence the determination of Spain, has not been touched, or at best but slightly. This confirms our conjecture, that the king, our master, alone, acts heartily and without reserve in this affair.”\*

The address of the wily Italian was, however, encountered by equal address. At length, the dutch and french ministers were induced to assume a more manly tone, and Alberoni, after in vain endeavouring to extort the cession of Sardinia, consented to open a negotiation on the basis of the proffered conditions. From the numerous dispatches which trace the progress of this delicate transaction, we present that † which marks the result.

“ Soon after the return of the king from the Escorial, we paid a visit to the cardinal, and opened our discourse by hoping that he had

Nov. 15.

\* Messrs. Stanhope and Dodington to lord Stanhope, Nov. 1, N. S. 1717.

† The originals of this, and many other dispatches, are in the french tongue, for the purpose of being directly communicated to the king, who did not understand the english language.

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received from the french ambassador the declaration of the regent in favour of our propositions. He replied, he had not yet received more than general expressions, on the desire of the regent to contribute as much as lay in his power to the accommodation between the two crowns. \* \* \*

“ Finding him a little calmed, we expressed our hopes that, after due reflection, he had seen the great advantage which would accrue to his catholic majesty from these propositions, and would no longer reject them as insufficient preliminaries for opening a negotiation.”

“ The king, my master,” he rejoined, “ will never be adverse to give peace to Europe. And, as a proof of this truth, as soon as he is assured by the regent, that the propositions meet with his approbation, his majesty will accept them as preliminaries. But as he has received information that the emperor has sent troops into Italy, and has already levied contributions on the states and princes, it is his positive resolution not to enter into any accommodation, while the emperor raises the most trifling imposition, or takes any step to trouble the repose of Italy. It is a resolution from which he will never swerve.”

“ On this we retired, and going to the french ambassador, told him what had passed. He promised to deliver, on the following morning, to the cardinal himself, the declaration which he



required ; and when Alberoni refused to see him for some days, he extorted an interview by a strong letter. After the interview, the ambassador came to us, and told us he had declared in the fullest manner the assent of the regent to our propositions. He had also pressed the cardinal to send a plenipotentiary to London, to treat on these conditions, but received for answer, the catholic king would never treat till he was assured that the emperor would not disturb Italy.

“ We requested, the same day, another interview, which the cardinal did not grant till the twelfth. After having observed, that as all difficulties were now removed on the side of France, we hoped the catholic king would now make no delay in accepting these preliminaries, and sending a plenipotentiary to London ? ‘ I have, as yet,’ he replied, ‘ received only general declarations from the regent. He has, indeed, written to me ; but he neither mentions any specific proposition, or hints at the mission of a plenipotentiary ; nor does the ambassador say any thing satisfactory. However, to convince you of the king’s regard for his britannic majesty, and of his sincere desire for peace, he is willing to accept the preliminaries, and to open a negotiation as soon as he is satisfied that the emperor will make no attempt on Italy, but not before.’

“ We replied, ‘ Reflect on what you said to us

CHAP. 27. in our last conference. We are come to assure  
1717. you, that the king, our master, will not refuse to give the catholic king this proof of his friendship ; but he cannot make instances to the court of Vienna to remove all causes of complaint, with proper dignity, unless certified that the king of Spain will send a minister to London, to open a negotiation as soon as the emperor has consented.'

“ ‘ The proofs,’ replied the cardinal, ‘ of my royal master’s sincerity are evident. At the request of the king of England, he stopped the movement of his troops, and suspended the embarkation already begun. He has paid more than 50,000 dollars for the transports, and has declared his resolution to be satisfied with Sardinia, a promise which he will religiously observe. I do also affirm, that without the interference of the king of England, he would have dispatched ten thousand men to the kingdom of Naples. He would then have been enabled to treat of an accommodation in a different manner from what he can do at present. Neither does he wish to prevent the emperor from arming in any way he pleases, provided he does not in the slightest degree infringe the neutrality ; for then he will break every treaty. All this is a sufficient proof of the catholic king’s sincerity, to induce his britannic majesty to take the step which we

desire. But it is idle to suppose that the king will send a plenipotentiary to London, before he knows what will be required of him. This he will not do ; nor, indeed, will this step be of the consequence which you attach to it. The delay will be trifling ; for you cannot know that our ambassador, already at London, has not either full powers to treat as soon as the said declaration is made by the emperor, or that he will not receive them before that time. But in all cases, I pledge the word of the king, that a plenipotentiary shall be dispatched without a moment's delay, to open a negotiation on the basis of the preliminaries, as soon as his majesty receives the assurances which he demands for the security of Italy.

“ Finding it useless to continue this debate, we had recourse to another expedient, and required him to give a declaration in writing, that the catholic king accepted the preliminaries to treat of a peace, and would dispatch a plenipotentiary as soon as he should receive the required satisfaction from the emperor. He promised to send us this declaration, in a letter, this very afternoon.

“ We have taken occasion to repeat to him the two preliminary observations respecting the reversion of Parma and Tuscany, in the terms of Mr. Stanhope's instructions. We remarked also,

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that, after having engaged his majesty to make that overture to the emperor, if the king of Spain did not act with sincerity, his majesty could not any longer delay the execution of his treaty with the court of Vienna.

“ He particularly assured us, that the king of Spain would not give any subject of complaint on his side, and would not undertake the smallest enterprise contrary to this solemn promise.

“ The preliminaries being thus settled, we deemed it prudent to say a few words on the treaty in general ; and we touched again on the necessity of forming it on the basis of the reciprocal renunciations, without which all proceedings will be useless. To this the cardinal replied in the affirmative, adding that it was necessary for the conclusion of peace, which was the object of both crowns. He rose up, and we repaired to the french ambassador, and communicated the subject of our conference.

“ The next morning he sent us the promised letter. But as it was not conceived in such precise and specific terms as the importance of the business required, and we were unwilling to trust to the chance of an equivocal expression in the spanish tongue, we instantly sent another letter to the cardinal, in which we recapitulated the promise of the king of Spain to treat on the basis of the preliminaries, and to undertake nothing

during the negotiation, as soon as the emperor shall have equally promised not to infringe the neutrality of Italy. We worded it in such a manner, that the silence of the cardinal should have the same force as a positive answer. A messenger delivering the letter to him, he read it, and returned the envelope, with the reply; 'there is no need of an answer.' We hope we have thus placed the question beyond a doubt; and that there will not be the smallest opening for cavil, however well they may be inclined. \* \* \*

"In a word, by our letter to the cardinal, by his answer, and by what has passed in general concerning the reciprocal renunciations, our principal view was directed to soften things, to place our sovereign in a situation to prevent further acts of hostility on either side, and to give time for the operation of his good offices, towards completing the glorious work of peace, or taking proper measures in case of a rupture. Such were our principal intentions, and we hope that our letters and the answer of the cardinal will produce these effects; at least, we flatter ourselves, that they will exonerate his majesty from any obligation to take an open and direct part, even according to the most rigorous interpretation of his engagements."

In the midst of these negotiations, the cardinal had cause to tremble for the stability of his newly

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acquired power. : Philip, afflicted with a relapse of his hypochondriac disorder, was unequal to the transaction of public business, and the whole management of affairs was left in the hands of the queen and Alberoni. In the moment of a more violent attack, accompanied with faintings, and the most alarming symptoms, the confessor was summoned at midnight to perform the last offices of the church ; and the king made his testament with the usual formalities.

This temporary suspension of the royal functions, and the power assumed by the queen and cardinal, gave new force to the national antipathy against a foreign minister. To increase the unpopularity of the Italian government, rumours were industriously circulated, that the regency was to be intrusted to the queen, which would not only have militated against the constitution of the kingdom, but would have left the administration in the hands of Alberoni.

“ You have already seen,” observe the british envoys, “ the state of the king’s health. He is a little better to day ; as his disorder is one of the most flattering, its termination cannot be placed at any certain period. But we believe that cabals have already commenced, and we will endeavour to ascertain the real situation of affairs, as much as is possible in so delicate a matter. By the will which the king executed a few days ago at

the Escorial, we do not at all doubt that the queen is nominated regent ; but it is contrary to the custom of this country, to see the government exercised by a princess who is not the mother of the king ; and all those who speak out, are of one opinion on this point. Further, the queen has not acquired a single friend in the country, as far as we can discover ; so that it is nothing but fear, which can induce these people to submit to her regency. Reason therefore persuades us that this pretended disposition of the king will not be followed, in case of his death ; but on the other hand, the experience we have of the degradation of this nation leads to conclusions far different from those so clearly deduced from reason.”\*

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At the same time, the most horrid reports were spread to rouse the national odium, and an intention imputed to the queen of poisoning the children of Philip by the late queen, in order to place her own issue on the throne.

Such rumours, however extravagant, raised violent emotions among a people, as proverbially jealous of foreigners, as they are zealously devoted to their established forms of government. Application being made by the discontented to the regent of France, they received from him the

\* Messrs. Stanhope and Dodington to lord Stanhope, Madrid, Nov. 1, N. S. 1717.

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most solemn promises of protection, accompanied with assurances, that he would employ his utmost endeavours to restore their national government, and baffle the machinations of the step-mother and her upstart favourite.

It is doubtful to what extremities this discontent might have led, had not the recovery of Philip given a new direction to the public sentiment. Still, however, some of the mal-contents, among whom we find the names of such distinguished characters as Aguilar, Veraguas, and Las Torres, suggested the plan of deposing the hypochondriac monarch, and placing the prince of Asturias on the throne. In the memorial transmitting this proposal to the regent, they observed, " Either our king is no longer capable of transacting the business of state, or he is under the controul of cardinal Alberoni and the italians. In the last case, we must deliver him from bondage; and in the first we must place the affairs of the monarchy in the hands of those who have the right to direct the helm when the king is incapable."\*

March 24,  
1718.

The complete recovery of Philip, and the failure of these intrigues, only served to establish the power of the queen; and to inflame the personal and political animosity of Philip and the regent, as well as to furnish a plausible pretext

\* Noailles, t. 3, p. 88.



for more direct interference in the affairs of France. The cardinal, also, experienced the most flattering proofs of the ascendancy of his royal patroness. He was rewarded with a liberal pension of 20,000 ducats per annum, and the rank of a grandee, and presented to the vacant bishopric of Malaga.

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The noble retailer\* of court anecdotes has recorded an adventure which happened at this period, and which will serve to shew the singular constitution of the spanish court, and the great unpopularity of the italian government. During the illness of the king, no person was admitted into the royal apartment, except those whom the queen and Alberoni chose to permit. As the medical department is under the controul of the lord chamberlain, the consultations of the physicians ought to be held, and the medicines administered, in his presence. The duke of Escalona, then holding the important office, was a grandee respectable for rank, age, talents, and virtues; who, as viceroy of Naples, and on many other occasions, had displayed his zealous attachment to the sovereign; but he was still more remarkable for his austere manners and punctilious character. As he evinced his intention to fulfil the duties of his charge, it was intimated to him by order of Alberoni, that he would do better not

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\* The duke of St. Simon.

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to intrude on the king's privacy; and content himself with proper enquiries at the door of the apartment.

This intimation being only received with contempt and indignation, Alberoni, by command of the queen, gave orders that the intrusive grandee should not be admitted. One afternoon, however, the duke presented himself. Having in vain demanded an entrance, he burst open the door in the face of the page in waiting, and after upbraiding him with his insolence, advanced into the royal bed-chamber. He observed the queen sitting at the head of the bed, the curtains of which were closely drawn, the cardinal standing by, and the attendants at a respectful distance. The duke, who, besides his advanced age, was crippled with the gout, slowly traversed the apartment, by the help of his cane. Being observed by the queen, she beckoned the cardinal, who sent one of the attendants, ordering him to retire. As the duke still continued to advance, the cardinal himself approached and told him, the king wished to be alone. "That is not true," exclaimed the indignant grandee, "I am not blind. You did not approach the head of the bed, nor did his majesty speak to you."

Alberoni continuing to urge him to retire, gently pressed him by the arm. This insult

roused the choler of the lord chamberlain, who burst into reproaches against the insolence of the cardinal for preventing him from approaching the royal person, and performing the duties of his office. A struggle ensued; the duke, who was the weakest, sunk into a chair; but grappling with his antagonist, in a paroxysm of rage, struck him on the head and shoulders with his cane, calling him a little contemptible varlet, who deserved nothing but a drubbing, with various epithets, which the irritation of the moment suggested; declaring at the same time, that if not restrained by the respect due to the royal presence, he would kick him out of the room. The cardinal with difficulty disengaged himself; but the duke, when unable to reach him, still continued to abuse, and threaten him by his gestures; while the queen and attendants witnessed the singular scene in silent astonishment.

Soon after his return home, the duke received an order of banishment from Madrid, and the moment his disgrace was known, his house was filled with a crowd of all ranks, who hastened to testify their respect and regard. No other notice was however taken of this curious affair. As the cardinal was apprehensive of increasing the general odium by a more vigorous act of authority, the duke was recalled in a few months; but he indignantly rejected all overtures for a recon-

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ciliation, and never again spoke to the minister while in Spain. To add to the singularity of this adventure, the king of Spain knew nothing of the squabble, nor the banishment and recal of the duke, till after the disgrace of Alberoni.\*

\* Memoires de St. Simon, t. 7, p. 215, 220, who informs us he received the anecdote from the duke of Escalona himself.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.


1717—1718.

*New efforts of France and England to promote an accommodation—Mission of the marquis de Nancré to Madrid, and cabals of the regent with the disaffected spaniards—England equips an armament to check the aggressions of Spain—Indignation of Philip—Reproachful letters from Alberoni to Mr. Dodington—His intrigues in France and England—Negotiations with Victor Amadeus—Invasion of Sicily—Arrival of the british armament on the spanish coasts, and new attempts for an accommodation—Conclusion of the quadruple alliance—Arrival of earl Stanhope, and his negotiations at Madrid—Destruction of the spanish fleet by admiral Byng—Indignation of the court—Fruitless offer of Gibraltar, as the recompence for the accession of Philip to the quadruple alliance—Departure of earl Stanhope—Manifestos of Spain relative to the invasion of Sicily.*

AS it soon became evident that the solemn promise given by Alberoni in the name of his sovereign, to accommodate the disputes with the emperor on the basis of the preliminary propositions, was merely intended to gain time, and amuse the allies, and that nothing less than the ruin, or at least the reduction, of the austrian power in Italy would satisfy the court of Madrid; England spurned at the temporizing spirit of the dutch government, and the vacillating measures of the regent, and adopted the resolution to extort

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the consent of Philip, or join the emperor in offensive measures.

The regent, either to give more force, or rather the appearance of more force, to his representations, sent the marquis de Nancré to Madrid, as his ambassador extraordinary, to second the instances of England. But this ostensible commission was merely a veil to cover the real design, which proves how seldom a cabinet is induced to contravene its fundamental principles of policy. While Nancré was instructed to establish a private understanding with Alberoni, and to avoid any communication with the disaffected nobles, or the slightest appearance which might give umbrage, St. Aignan, the regular ambassador, was to direct a personal attack against the cardinal, to continue the cabals with the disaffected, and stimulate them to overthrow all foreign influence. Indeed, from the combined instructions given to the two ambassadors, it is evident the purpose of the regent was to amuse all parties, to take advantage of the progress of events; and while he gratified his personal animosity against Alberoni, and deluded the british cabinet with an affectation of zeal for the re-establishment of tranquillity, to avoid measures which might occasion an absolute breach with Spain, or tend to reduce the power of the House of Bourbon in either of the branches.


This double intrigue did not escape the notice of Alberoni, who turned the machinations of the regent against himself. By a parade of his correspondence and communications, he sowed suspicions of his sincerity among the grandees; and he employed the same expedient in his intercourse with the british ministers, to inspire a jealousy of France, or to evade the force of their representations and remonstrances by adducing the more moderate language and sentiments of the regent. He even caused rumours to be circulated, that the princess Orsini and Orri were to be restored to power; by the support or connivance of the french court. The effect which this artifice produced among the grandees may be estimated by the answer of the regent to their representations.

“ You may,” he wrote to the ambassador, “ inform them that this news is perfectly indifferent to me; and that I, in particular, can have no share in the measure. Having taken the resolution to liberate the spaniards from the domination of foreigners, I should hardly be inclined to replace their government in the hands of a french woman, who is my personal enemy.”\*

The cardinal omitted no endeavour to work even on the hopes and fears of the regent him-

\* Noailles, t. 5, p. 86—93.

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self. He declared to Nancré that the king was apprised of his intention to sign a treaty with the emperor and England, and intreated him to desist, or at least to suspend its execution. 'In this case,' he said, 'his majesty will regard his interests as his own; on the contrary, neither time nor services will ever appease his indignation; the regent must consider him as a personal and inveterate enemy.'\*

The british ministers were at length wearied with these affected delays, and petty cabals. Convinced that a rupture could not be prevented by such contemptible machinations, they assumed a tone and aspect becoming a great nation. Without further regarding the hesitating conduct of the dutch, the equivocations of the regent, or the illusions of Alberoni; the king of England gave a public proof of his resolution to take a decisive part in the rising commotions. He appealed to the parliament on the alarming state of Europe, and the danger of a war, obtained large supplies of money, and equipped a fleet to sail to the Mediterranean, for the protection of the coasts of Italy. Its destination was imparted to Monteleon, with the hope that the dread of encountering this powerful armament would make some impression on the court of Spain. These measures, however, only called forth

\* St. Simon, t. 8, p. 241.



resentment and reproaches ; and Monteleon presented a vehement remonstrance against the equipment of the fleet in time of peace, which he declared would cause umbrage to the king his master, and affect the good intelligence between the two courts.\*

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Philip felt extreme indignation at this interference of the only power whose maritime force could check his enterprises in the Mediterranean. But no one was more deeply mortified than Alberoni, who calculated on the gratitude, if not the assistance of the british nation. Equally chagrined and indignant to see his machinations foiled by those whom he had fondly hoped to cajole, he wrote two reproachful letters † to Mr. Dodington, who had laid down his ministry, and returned to London, which are strikingly expressive of the irritation of his mind.


“ The catholic king will take no resolution on the subject of the commercial treaty, until he sees the developement of the piece. You are a good witness of the sincerity of his intentions towards the king of England. You well know that he did not hesitate to sacrifice, by two new conventions, all the advantages which he had

April 5.

\* Tindal, v. 19, p. 202.

† This and the following letter from Alberoni to Mr. Dodington have already been published, in the original french, in Seward's Anecdotes, v. 2, p. 262, from the Melcombe Papers, in the possession of H. P. Wyndham, esq.

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gained by the treaty of Utrecht ; forgetting that by the means of England he had been despoiled of his revenues, provinces, and kingdoms ; an injustice which will always cry for vengeance, as contrary to all laws divine and human. By so great a sacrifice, the catholic king thought he should bind the king of England to a grateful return, and the british nation to a closer union with Spain ; or that on occasions, where neither of the two nations had any particular interest, the king of England would at least continue neuter.

“ Nevertheless, with unspeakable chagrin I see it, neither of these cases will happen ; and I shall be exposed to the just resentment of their catholic majesties. Every gazette proves that your ministry is no longer english but german, and basely sold to the court of Vienna ; and that through the cabals so common in your country, attempts are making to draw the nation itself into the snare. It is a strong proof of what I say, that having exhausted England of men and money, to acquire states and kingdoms for the archduke, they have recently supplied him with a large subsidy.

“ The sentiments of esteem and friendship which I entertain for you, and which I shall always continue to entertain, oblige me to speak to you with sincerity.”

“ Mr. Patiño is arrived here, and has brought the list of duties, which is approved by the chiefs of all the different nations at Cadiz. It is in the hands of his majesty, but he will not sign it till he has seen the developement of the piece, as I have already informed you. I cannot believe that your nation will relinquish its advantages to concern itself in the affairs of a prince, with whom it has no interest, and from whom it can draw no advantage, against the king of Spain, from whom it has received so many marks of good will. I cannot think that so wise a people will place in the hands of the archduke, the kingdom of Sicily, to render him formidable to all Europe. Excuse me, Sir ; but I cannot help saying that all the cabinets of Europe are lost to common sense, that policy has given place to the caprice of a few individuals, who without rhyme or reason, (perhaps for their private interests) cut and pare states and kingdoms as if they were dutch cheeses.”\*

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April 16.

He had soon fresh motives for resentment in consequence of a personal attack, from a quarter, and on a subject, likely to produce a serious effect in Spain. The imperial minister at Rome laid a formal complaint against him, for entering

\* Lesquels sans rime et sans raison, et peut etre par des fins particulieres, coupent et rognent des etats et des royaumes comme s'ils etoient des fromages d'Hollande.

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into negotiations with the infidels, and supplying them with arms, stores, and money, to the detriment of a christian prince, and the injury of the christian faith. He concluded with supplicating the pope to withhold the bull for investing Alberoni with the archbishopric of Seville, to which he had been recently nominated.

The minister did not tamely acquiesce in the charge. He made a spirited reply, denying the facts alleged against him. But he at once avowed and justified his alliance with the mahometans, as grounded on the acknowledged principles of human policy, and adduced the examples even of the popes themselves, who had united their arms with those of infidels to reduce the power of a public and dangerous enemy.\* His arguments, however plausible, did not produce the desired effect. After accepting his resignation of the see of Malaga, the pope refused to invest him with that of Seville ; and thus his very promotion terminated in an exclusion from all ecclesiastical preferment, in a country where he was scarcely less master than the sovereign himself.

Personal mortifications and public opposition served only to stimulate the spirit, and call forth the resources of Alberoni. He tampered with every power in Europe, which from principles,

\* Historical Register for 1718, p. 183—223.

connections or situation, might contribute to embarrass his opponents. To shackle the efforts of the emperor, he opposed the attempts of the maritime powers and France to mediate a peace with the turks. He opened a communication with Ragotski, the exiled prince of Transylvania, and offered him a subsidy sufficient to purchase the auxiliary aid of 30,000 turks. In France he endeavoured to excite internal commotions, by fomenting the discontents against the regent, encouraged the protestants in the Cevennes to raise again the standard of revolt, and opened a communication with the discontented in Brittany.

He attempted to awaken the commercial jealousy of the dutch, and lured them with the hopes of securing the advantages which were to be wrested from England.

In England, also, he endeavoured to give a new impulse to those feuds, which are the natural effects of a free government, and the struggles of contending parties. By means of his agents he published exaggerated complaints on the infractions of the constitution, the burthen of the taxes, and the usual topics of popular declamation. He did not forget also to touch on the delicate subject of commercial advantages. In England, as in Holland, he wrote circular letters to the merchants, expatiating on the losses of trade which must ensue from a rupture with

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Spain. He found zealous partisans in the opposition, which consisted not merely of the excluded tories, but numerous chiefs of the whigs, among whom are distinguished the names of Walpole, Townshend, Carteret, Methuen, and Pulteney.\* Lastly, he entered into a direct and intimate connection with the jacobites, and raised their drooping hopes with the promise of foreign support. And as he was now convinced that England had decidedly embraced the cause of the emperor, he urged his sovereign to divert the armament destined for Sicily to the british isles, and lay the axe to the very root of the confederacy; but fortunately for our national tranquillity, Philip was too much ruled by his personal resentment, and too anxious for an establishment in Italy, to adopt this bold advice.

Although Alberoni despised the impotent resentment of the pontiff, he gratified his own personal vengeance, by dismissing the nuntio, recalling the spaniards from Rome, and suspending the ecclesiastical contributions.

But it was with Victor Amadeus, whose assistance or connivance was so essential in his designs against Italy, that this great master of political intrigue employed all his resources.

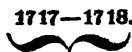
\* Letters from Monteleon, Alberoni, and secretary Craggs, Hist. Reg. for 1718, p. 300—393.—Tindal, v. 19.—Memoirs of sir Robert Walpole, ch. 17.

Aware that a prince of so grasping a character must be indignant at the prospect of an exchange which was to satisfy the emperor at his expence, he lured him with the tender of a part of the Milanese and the duchy of Modena, instead of the barren island of Sardinia, which was the inadequate and uncertain compensation offered by the allies in return for Sicily. His offers were received, at least with a favourable attention, by a prince who was watching the progress of events to sell his services to the highest bidder. The wily monarch even publicly testified his determination to embrace the cause of Spain. "He had acquired Sicily," he said, "in the last war, and would preserve it, with the last drop of his blood; faithful to his engagements, he would never abandon the catholic king." Aware that he should ultimately be compelled to acquiesce in the proposed exchange, he resolved to throw on the emperor the principal burthen of defending his expected acquisition, and drew a considerable part of his troops from Sicily to parade them on the frontiers of the Milanese.

He even sent a private agent to Madrid, who was charged with a series of propositions as the basis of an alliance with Spain. These were; a million of crowns before he took the field; a weekly subsidy of 7,000 for carrying on the war; the assistance of 15,000 spanish auxiliaries in

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Lombardy ; and a diversion by the spaniards on the side of Naples. The contributions levied on the conquered countries were, to be equally divided ; the conquered places to be garrisoned by a force of half piemontese and half spaniards, commanded by a piemontese governor ; and finally after the subjugation of Naples, 20,000 spaniards were to march into Lombardy, to complete the reduction of the Milanese, which was to be the price of the assistance given by the king of Sicily.\*

While Europe was agitated by these cabals and negotiations, the spanish minister redoubled his efforts to hasten the departure of the powerful armament collected for the invasion of Sicily, which, from his intrigues with Victor Amadeus, and the secret connections formed with the natives, he hoped to find an easy conquest. The expedition, consisting of twenty-three ships of the line, with transports carrying 30,000 veteran troops, and all the requisites for the field, departed from Barcelona on the 18th of June ; and after touching at Cagliari, to take on board a part of the troops left in Sardinia, directed its course towards Sicily. On the 1st of July, the spaniards effected their landing near Cape Solanto, four leagues from Palermo, under the

\* Manifeste du Roi d'Espagne.—Rousset, t. 1, p. 234.—Ortiz, t. 7, p. 317.



command of the marquis of Lede, who, besides the chief direction of the expedition, was appointed future viceroy of Sicily.

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The great powers of Europe beheld with astonishment, Spain awakening from a lethargy of an hundred years, displaying a vigor and enterprise worthy the brightest days of the monarchy, and threatening the renewal of the war which had scarcely been terminated by the peace of Utrecht. Apprehension of the rising troubles gave new firmness to the determination of the british government, and fixed the wavering policy of the regent. A new alliance was speedily arranged between Stanhope and Dubois, the confidential ministers, in each of the two countries. Means were instantly taken to accelerate the conclusion of the treaty between the emperor and the turks ; and a strong austrian force was transferred from the Hungarian frontier into Italy. To acquire a claim to the support of this alliance, the emperor announced his consent to accept the mediation of England for the arrangement of the long pending contest with Philip ; and measures were taken to obtain the accession of the dutch.

This treaty, originally concluded by the emperor, France, and England, and afterwards called the quadruple alliance, from the accession of the dutch, was founded on the same

Aug. 2.

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general principles as had been already proposed. The treaty of Utrecht was considered as the basis. But a formal engagement was introduced for the transfer of Sicily to the emperor, and the reversion of Tuscany and Parma was entailed on Don Carlos; and for the accomplishment of this condition, the strong places of both duchies were to be garrisoned by 6,000 swiss in the pay of the mediating powers. To satisfy the honour of Philip, the emperor agreed to renounce the empty title of king of Spain. As an indemnification for the loss of Sicily, Victor Amadeus was to receive Sardinia; and the emperor not only confirmed the cessions made to the house of Savoy, in 1703, but acknowledged their right to the eventual succession of Spain, in case of the failure of issue to Philip. Lastly, the term of three months was to be allowed for the accession of Philip and the king of Sicily, and in case of further delay, the whole force of the contracting parties was to be employed in extorting their acquiescence.

Before the formal signature, the terms of the treaty were communicated to the court of Madrid. On this occasion Alberoni inveighed bitterly against the two contracting powers, but more particularly against the duke of Orleans. "The regent," he said, "has, in the face of the world, declared himself the friend of a power which is

the enemy of the king his uncle ; and the time is probably arrived when he will be entangled in acts of hostility against his august relative. Marshal d'Uxelles, in signing this alliance to avoid a rupture, will see France in arms against the king of Spain. His catholic majesty, for his part, is resolved to wage eternal war, rather than consent to such an infamous proposal ; and while he has life and strength will wreak his vengeance on those who presume to extort his acquiescence by force. Should Stanhope speak in the tone of a legislator, he will be ill received. The passport which he required is expedited. His propositions will be heard, but will not meet with the slightest attention, unless they differ entirely from the project ; and he will be surprised to be informed that the king will not at present listen to any offer of Tuscany, but will reserve his rights for a proper time and place."\*

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In the midst of this paroxysm of disappointment and indignation, earl Stanhope repaired to Spain, and the british fleet under admiral Byng sailed for the Mediterranean to give weight to the propositions of peace. Before, however, earl Stanhope had reached Madrid, the spaniards had effected their debarkation in Sicily ; and the british admiral, appearing off Cape St. Vincent, dispatched a messenger with a formal declaration

June 4.

\* St. Simon, t. 8, p. 253.

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June 20.

July 1.

of his arrival and instructions to the envoy, Mr. Stanhope.

“ You will please,” he said, “ to acquaint his catholic majesty with my arrival with the fleet in the Mediterranean, and that I am instructed in the king my master’s name, to promote all measures which may contribute to compose the differences subsisting between the king of Spain and the emperor.

“ Should his catholic majesty not please to accept the mediation of our master, but continue in the resolution of attacking the emperor’s territories in Italy ; in that case, I am commanded by the king my master, to maintain the neutrality of Italy, and defend the emperor’s territories, by opposing all force that shall endeavour to attack him in that quarter.”\*

In an interview with the cardinal, the british envoy, after expatiating on the anxiety of France and England, to preserve the peace of Europe, produced this letter, to enforce his representations. Such a peremptory message could not fail to irritate the high spirited and impetuous minister, and he indignantly replied, “ My master will encounter all perils, and rather be driven from Spain, than recal his troops, or consent to a suspension of arms. The spaniards are not to

\* Admiral Byng to Mr. Stanhope, June 20, O. S. 1718.—  
Political State for 1718, p. 248.

be intimidated; and I am so confident of the bravery of our fleet, that if your admiral should think proper to attack it, I shall be in no pain for the result."

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To this rhodomontade the envoy made no other reply than to present a list of the british fleet, and desire him to compare it with that of Spain. The mortifying coolness which accompanied the notice, roused the choler of the cardinal; he snatched the list, tore it to pieces, and trampled it under foot. To all further representations, he sullenly replied, "I will communicate your message to the king, and apprize you of his majesty's resolution in two days." But either from contempt, or for the sake of gaining time for the spanish fleet to take refuge at Malta, he delayed the performance of his promise for nine days, and then returned the admiral's letter, with a brief note, added in the form of a postscript:

"His catholic majesty has done me the honour to tell me that the chevalier Byng may execute the orders which he has received from the king his master. (Signed) ALBERONI."\*

"Escorial, July 15."

Meanwhile, the spanish troops had commenced their operations in Sicily, with the fairest prospect of signal success. Three days after their

\* Tindal, v. 19, p. 202.

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July 13.

landing, they advanced towards Palermo, and being joined by crowds of the nobles, who hailed the restoration of the spanish government, the city opened its gates, and, after a blockade of a few days, the citadel itself surrendered. The revolt instantly became general. A scanty force of 7,000 men, which was the amount of the piemontese troops, was too weak to restrain a whole people, and make head against a superior enemy; and several of the smaller posts were reduced by the partisans of Spain themselves. After the reduction of Palermo, the fleet transported the infantry to Messina, while the cavalry approached the place by land. Here, as in other instances, the appearance of the victorious troops was the signal of revolt; the natives themselves drove the piemontese into the citadel, where they were instantly besieged, and welcomed the spaniards with acclamations of joy.\*

July 23.

In this situation of affairs, Sicily would have proved an easy conquest, had not the british fleet appeared off the coast. The admiral anchored a few days in the bay of Naples; and, as the arrangements for the transfer of Sicily had been already completed, he agreed to cover the passage of 3,000 germans across the strait, to reinforce the garrison in the citadel of Messina. The approach of this powerful force greatly em-


\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 270.—Historical Register, p. 390.

barrassed the spaniards, both in their naval and military operations: the naval commanders, after spending much time in deliberations, whether they should resist or retire, quitted their station before Messina, and bore away to the south. Having completed the embarkation of the german troops, admiral Byng drew towards the Faro, and in his passage sent a letter to the spanish commander, deprecating hostilities, and proposing a suspension of arms. His overture being rejected, and news arriving that the spanish fleet was in the strait, a short distance ahead, he sent back the germans to Reggio; made sail, and on the 11th of August came up with them, in the vicinity of Syracuse.

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The spanish admiral, Castanietta, though a brave and excellent seaman, was yet unequal to the direction of a numerous fleet, and his embarrassment was increased by the uncertainty of his situation. Though it is probable the minister intended that the fleet should retire to Malta in case of necessity, yet no positive orders appear to have been given. The admiral, without any rule for the direction of his conduct, did not deem himself authorised to become the aggressor, and was unwilling to quit the coasts of Sicily. Applying to Don Joseph Patiño, who superintended the expedition, he received instructions

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which rather increased than relieved his embarrassment. He well knew that his fleet was inferior to the english in force, discipline, and equipment; and, therefore, he could not but deprecate a conflict with an enemy who had made the sea their element.

Thus hesitating and embarrassed, his movements gave advantage to a skilful and determined antagonist. On the first appearance of the english fleet, he had passed the strait to occupy a position near Messina, under the protection of batteries on shore; but on the advance of Byng into the bay of Naples, he weighed anchor, and stretched away to the south, to rejoin a division detached to keep open a retreat towards Malta or Sardinia. Even when the british ships were descried, he seems to have doubted whether they would commence the attack, and slowly continued his course, to avoid equally the appearance of alarm or defiance.

On the 11th, in the morning, the advance of Byng convinced him that it was too late to avoid a battle; but the baffling winds and contrary currents of this narrow sea occasioned the separation of his ships, and prevented him, if inclined, from disengaging himself from the british fleet, which was soon intermixed with his own. In this situation, admiral Muri, with six of the



lighter ships and the gallies, quitted the main body, to draw towards the coast, and even the men of war could not take their places in the line, though towed.

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Meanwhile, the british admiral detached a division to cut off Muri, and, by favour of a partial breeze, continuing his progress after the main body, an engagement began. The spaniards, without order and union, were attacked almost singly by superior force, and successively compelled to yield; for, though they fought with desperation, this celebrated conflict was rather a running fight, than a regular action. The commander in chief, after a most obstinate resistance, and being dangerously wounded, was made prisoner, and the whole fleet either captured or destroyed, except four ships and six frigates, the division of admiral Cammock, who made his escape, and gained the harbour of St. Valetta. The division of Muri was driven on shore near Aosta, and all the ships shared the fate of the rest.

After this destructive action, the british admiral, affecting to deprecate the imputation of having been the aggressor, sent one of his captains with a letter of excuse to the marquis of Lede, stating that the spaniards had commenced the battle, and urging that this accident ought

CHAP. 28. not to be considered as a rupture between the  
1717—1718. two countries.\*

Before the intelligence of this disastrous event reached Madrid, earl Stanhope arrived, and joined with the french plenipotentiary, the marquis de Nancré, in tendering the mediation of the neutral powers, and proposing the accession of Spain to the quadruple alliance, which was now on the point of being signed by France, England, and the emperor. At first, Alberoni condescended to employ his usual dissimulation, and amused them with the hope of bringing their negotiation to a pacific issue. But the news of the successful descent on Sicily, the enthusiasm which it excited in the capital, and the fortunate arrival of treasure from America, encouraged him to throw off the mask, and induced the court to assume its usual haughty tone.

The allies, however, omitted neither lures nor threats to divert Philip from further aggressions. So anxious was the king of England to prevent a general war, that he offered, first through the channel of the regent, and afterwards by the mouth of earl Stanhope, the restoration of Gibraltar, provided Philip would accede to the quadruple alliance without delay.† But with the

\* Political State, v. 16, p. 56, 488.—St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 297—306.—Tindal, v. 19, p. 216.

† Dispatch from Mr. Stanhope to Horace Walpole. Oct. 11, 1725.

brilliant hopes which the conquest of Sardinia, and the successful debarkation in Sicily, had inspired, even this darling object was not regarded, and the offer was peremptorily rejected, as an inadequate compensation for the rights and pretensions which Philip fondly expected to realise.\*

\* The offer of Gibraltar, made through the regent, was enveloped with such mystery, that it has never been clearly traced. The assertion of that prince himself, which was never contradicted by the british court, leaves no room to doubt, that he was duly authorised by George the first to make the offer; but in what manner, and whether it was conditional or not, cannot now be ascertained, though the subsequent discussions on this subject furnish reason to suppose that it was coupled with some condition besides the immediate accession of Spain to the peace.

Duclos, however, has given an account of this arrangement, which carries improbability on its very face. He says, the object of Louville's secret mission to Madrid was to communicate this offer, and that measures were even settled for the clandestine surrender of the fortress. At the moment of signing the peace, Philip was to receive an order, under the royal sign manual, directing the governor of Gibraltar, to deliver up the place to a spanish army, which was to approach and summon the garrison to surrender. In virtue of this order, the spaniards were to be admitted without opposition, and the british garrison to withdraw to Tangier.

The bare relation of these circumstances proves how little foreigners are acquainted with the forms and mechanism of our government. Without laying stress on the circumstance that at the time of Louville's mission the intimate connection of France and England was not formed, and, allowing the offer to have been afterwards made; yet the royal signature, unless countersigned by the proper officer of state, would not have been obeyed by any military commander; and we are convinced that no minister would have been sufficiently rash to affix his name to so clandestine and informal a transfer. We have discussed this subject at large in the *Memoirs of sir Robert Walpole*, ch. 34, and shall hereafter resume it in the present work, ch. 31. Duclos, t. 1, p. 276.—*Moore's Life of Alberoni*, p. 104.

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In two audiences which were granted to the ambassadors, the king and queen expressed, with unusual energy, their dissatisfaction with the proffered treaty, as unjust in itself, and equally prejudicial to their interests, and offensive to their honour. Their indignation was still further roused by a peremptory memorial, with which the communication was followed, allowing only three months for the acceptance of the quadruple alliance, and announcing that any additional delay would be followed by a declaration of war from France and the maritime powers. In answer to this threat, the cardinal was ordered to declare that his sovereign would never lay down his arms till Sardinia and Sicily were ceded to Spain ; and till the emperor, besides gratifying the House of Savoy for the loss of Sicily, had engaged to maintain only a certain number of troops in Italy.

All hopes of an accommodation having vanished, earl Stanhope took his departure. But before he quitted the capital, some intelligence of the discomfiture of the fleet probably reached Alberoni ; for in the final interview, he recurred to his former professions of amity, dwelt on his own pacific inclinations, and threw the blame of the rupture on the personal antipathy of the king against the emperor and the regent. With tears of vexation and disappointment, he declared

that he was reluctantly forced into hostile measures, and sincere in his wishes to promote a speedy accommodation.

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“Whether,” observes lord Stanhope, “the cardinal deceives M. de Nancré and me, I cannot determine; but I will own to your lordship, that I think he was desirous to have had the suspension of arms, and that he will still endeavour to accommodate matters. He complains bitterly of the king’s obstinacy, who is at present more governed by his personal animosity against the emperor and the regent, than by any reasons of state. He represents him, besides, as exceedingly jealous and mistrustful of all about him; insomuch that for a considerable time, no person has ever spoken to the king and queen asunder; nor does any other minister ever dare to speak but in the presence of the king, queen, and cardinal, who, by what I can judge, are every one jealous of each other. The cardinal shed tears when I parted with him; has promised to write to me, and to let slip no occasion which may offer of adjusting matters.”\*

Still anxious to preserve appearances with Victor Amadeus, the spanish minister did not, as on the preceding occasion, publish a justification of the attack on Sicily, nor represent it as a conquered country. On the contrary, he wrote a

\* Bayonne, Sept. 2, 1718. Schaub Papers.

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cajoling letter to Victor Amadeus, notifying the disembarkation of the spanish troops, and the capture of Palermo; representing it, not as an act of aggression, but as a precautionary measure to prevent the island from being wrested from the rightful owner, by the very powers who had guaranteed it at the peace of Utrecht, and professing to hold it in deposit till it could be safely restored to him.\*

This application, however, did not produce the effect for which it was probably calculated: Victor Amadeus, either really offended by the attack, or expecting to gain more advantageous terms from the emperor than from Spain, appealed to France and England as guarantees of the peace of Utrecht. He added bitter complaints against the perfidy and injustice of Alberoni, who had amused him with feigned proffers of amity to obtain a more favourable opportunity for the invasion of his dominions.

This memorial at length drew from the spanish court a counter manifesto, retorting the charge of perfidy and duplicity on the court of Turin. The king now declared, that no longer considering Sicily as a deposit, he had determined to prevent its transfer to his bitter and implacable enemy, by incorporating it with the spanish monarchy, from which it had been dismem-

\* Ortiz, t. 7, p. 336.



bered. The manifesto concluded with an attempt to throw the blame of the enterprise on the courts of Paris and London, by representing, that in their affected candour, they had, in the preceding May, divulged to the spanish minister the secret negotiation for the transfer of Sicily to the emperor. This communication alone, it was urged, reduced the king to the indispensable necessity of opposing force to force.\*

\* Vie d'Alberoni, p. 420.—Manifeste de la Cour d'Espagne, sur l'entreprise de la Sicile, in Rousset, t. 1, p. 234.

## CHAPTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

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*Remonstrances of the spanish court against the conduct of England—Cabals of Alberoni with the different powers of Europe—Arrangements with Sweden and Russia for an invasion of England—Conspiracy against the regent of France detected—Papers and manifestos published on the occasion—France declares war—Philip heads the army—Unsuccessful campaign—Capture of the frontier fortresses, and destruction of the docks and arsenals—Death of Charles the twelfth, and neutrality of Sweden and Russia—Fruitless expedition to Scotland in favour of the pretender—Unsuccessful attempt on Brittany—Misfortunes of the spanish arms in Sicily—Accession of the dutch to the quadruple alliance—Ineffectual manœuvres of Alberoni to divide the allies.*

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ALBERONI, however mortified and disappointed, was not discouraged by the fatal discomfiture of the fleet which he had employed such exertions to form ; and which, in the energetic language of Spain, was described as sprung out of the earth.

Vehement complaints were instantly made to the british government against so flagrant a breach of that good faith for which the nation was honourably distinguished. In a letter, addressed to the secretary of state, but calculated



for the public eye, the ambassador, Monteleon, remonstrated against this unprecedented outrage, in contradiction, as he stated, to the very declaration of the admiral himself, that he was commissioned only to defend the dominions of the emperor. He testified the indignation felt by the king and all true spaniards, at this hostile and unprovoked assault from a nation to whom they had shewn peculiar favour. He concluded with a declaration, calculated to work on the feelings of a generous people, that notwithstanding these unmerited aggressions, the king, his master, would punctually distribute the effects of the flota as soon as it arrived from America; that he would religiously observe the civil and commercial relations of the two countries, and would maintain the english in all the grants and advantages which they had hitherto enjoyed.

Lastly, the cardinal himself confirmed the instances of the ambassador in a letter, which was intended publicly to express the sentiments of his sovereign. In this piece, besides repeating and dwelling on the complaints made by Monteleon, he artfully introduced hints calculated to convey the impression that the admiral, with the connivance of the ministry, had been induced to swerve from the instructions prescribed to him, by the instances and bribes of the imperial viceroy count Daun. He even affected to find in his

CHAP. 29. official account of the battle, expressions of re-  
 1718—1719. morse for his unjust aggression.\*

It was not, however, by memorials and papers that the spanish minister manifested his resentment ; but he employed all the resources of policy to confound and embarrass the allies, and in particular to turn the attack against France and England.

In no instance were his efforts more successful than in the north. During the recent war, the king of Denmark had conquered Holstein, Sleswic, Bremen, and Verden ; but unable to resist the attacks of Charles the twelfth, after his return from his turkish captivity, he ceded Bremen and Verden to George the first, as elector of Hanover, to purchase his accession to the confederacy formed against Sweden, and thus obtained the co-operation of a british squadron in the Baltic.

Charles the twelfth was highly provoked by this interference, and in return caballed with the jacobites in England, as well as with the exiles in France and Holland. His pride was still more deeply wounded by the consequent arrest of Goertz and Gyllenborg, his ministers in England and Holland, the disclosure of his

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 34.—Ortiz, t. 7, lib. 23, c. 6.—Tindal, v. 19, p. 386, 393.—Letters of Monteleon and Alberoni in Hist. Reg. for 1718.

intrigues with the discontented, and his plans for the invasion of England.\*

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Peter the great was equally dissatisfied with the british government, for counteracting his attempts to obtain dominions in the empire. He likewise testified his resentment by caballing with the jacobites and the discontented party, though he affected to feel great abhorrence at the attempts of the british court to implicate him in the charges advanced against Charles the twelfth.

Alberoni profited by these circumstances to promote a reconciliation between these two rival monarchs, and turn their united force against a country which had equally offended both. He even sent the duke of Ormond into Russia, to negotiate a marriage between Anne, the daughter of Peter, and the son of the Pretender; and although this mission was not openly countenanced by Peter, yet the interference of the spanish minister was attended with effect. Swedish and russian ministers met in the isle of Aland, and, under the mediation of an agent from the spanish court, signed the preliminary articles of an accommodation. By which, Charles was to yield to Russia the territories on the shore of the Baltic, and in return was to be assisted in the conquest of Norway, and the recovery of Bremen and Verden. Their united

May, 1718.

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 252, 344.

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forces were finally to concur with those of Spain, in the invasion of the british isles, in order to restore the exiled family.\*

In France the state of parties presented ample scope to the machinations of the spanish minister. and encouraged him to imitate the cabals which the regent had formed at Madrid, to overthrow his own authority. All the partisans and admirers of the old court were combined against the government, for the connection with England, and dereliction of the long established maxims of french policy. Marshal Villars presented a strong memorial against the recent alliance, recommending a reconciliation with Spain, and a junction of the bourbon crowns against the emperor. These representations were supported by the dukes of Maine and Villeroy, in the council of state; and their arguments made such an impression on their colleagues, that the marshal d'Uxelles, head of the department of foreign affairs, would not affix his signature to the treaty till compelled by the personal authority of the duke of Orleans himself.† This party was supported by all the legitimated princes and princesses, not excepting even the wife of the regent, who were indignant at being robbed of the rights and honours granted by the

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 357.

† Mem. de Villars, t. 2, p. 383. — St. Simon, t. 10, p. 251.

deceased monarch. Nor was this sentiment confined to personal or political opponents; St. Simon, his devoted friend, did not scruple to acknowledge the superior claims of Philip to the government. "If," said he, addressing the duke, "the king of Spain should enter France unarmed, and, throwing himself on the nation, demand the regency in his own right; I confess, that, however attached to you, I should take my leave of you with tears, and acknowledge him as the true regent. If I, attached as I am to you, thus think and feel, what can you expect from the french in general?"\* The parliaments also, degraded collectively and individually, ranged themselves under the banners of the discontented nobility, as the means of recovering their former power, and vindicating the rights of the nation.

The conduct of the duke of Orleans gave additional strength to the general odium. The dilapidated state of the finances, though in reality derived from the ambitious wars of Louis the fourteenth, was attributed by popular prejudice to the existing government, and the evil was aggravated by the ruinous system of finance, of which Law was the author, and the personal extravagance of the regent. Religious feuds were added to civil dissensions; the contending

\* St. Simon, t. 7, p. 148.

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sects of jesuits and jansenists had been equally humbled ; the jesuits in particular were irritated against the regent, for robbing the order of their influence at court, by the removal of le Tellier from his post of royal confessor. These united causes, joined to the shameful profligacy of the regent, and the still more shameful enormities of his favourite Dubois, rapidly obliterated the respect and affection which he had at first gained by his superior abilities and captivating deportment.


The malcontents soon found a head in the duchess of Maine, the spirited daughter of the prince of Condé. She opened a communication with the queen of Spain, through Cellamar, the spanish ambassador, to whom the management of the whole intrigue was intrusted, and her faction was augmented by distinguished persons in every department of the church and state, as well as by officers of rank in the army. The different leaders of this party were, as is usual, actuated by different views. Some wished only to restore the last regulations of Louis the fourteenth ; some hoped to employ the aid of Philip for their own aggrandisement, or that of their body ; some merely to gratify personal resentment or political rivalry. But the skilful hand of Alberoni reduced their clashing interests to one general principle. He united all classes,

professions, and parties, in one common design to overthrow the government of the duke of Orleans, and transfer the regency to Philip, as the means of breaking the impolitic alliance with England and Austria, and facilitating his eventual succession to the crown, in case of the untimely death of the young monarch.

At once to abridge the resources of the regent, and to collect a powerful force of native frenchmen beyond the Pyrenees, the spanish government employed the most flattering encouragement to purchase the services of the disbanded officers, among whom, besides many of merit little inferior, we distinguish the name of the celebrated tactician Folard. By their connections and agency, levies of men were secretly made in the discontented provinces. A communication was also opened with a numerous party in Brittany, who were dissatisfied with the government, and excited to revolt by the promise of military aid from Spaip. Lastly, these designs were furthered by a powerful body among the jesuits, headed by the celebrated father la Tournemine, who maintained a direct and secret correspondence with the spanish court, through the channel of the confessor d'Aubenton.

So far, at length, was the conspiracy matured, that arrangements were made to seize the person of the regent, and convoke the states general to

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authorise the change of government. Addresses were actually prepared by cardinal Polignac, and the literary dependents of the House of Maine, to be presented to the king, the parliaments, and the states, in the name of Philip.

With all the precautions which the most intelligent head could devise, so extensive a design would scarcely have escaped the vigilance of the french government; much less when Cellamar himself seemed almost to court detection. Besides openly receiving the discontented of all ranks, he held his nocturnal interviews with the duchess of Maine, with an affectation of mystery, which was rather calculated to excite than baffle curiosity; employing the carriage of the marquis of Pompadour, and being driven by the count of Laval, who officiated as coachman. Lastly, to complete his unaccountable indiscretion, he employed persons little known and of doubtful fidelity, to transcribe and compose his most important papers.

It is no wonder that the secret transpired by all these avenues to publicity. General information of the plot was transmitted to the regent by the french ambassador at Madrid, by the king of England, and by the subordinate agents of Cellamar. The government, however, betrayed no sign of suspicion or alarm, but suffered the conspirators to mature their arrangements, and to



lay the train which, in the figurative language of the spanish minister, was "to spring the mine."\* For greater security, these dangerous papers were intrusted to Don Vincente Portocarrero, nephew of Cellamar, whose rank and connections were expected to secure him from the risks of an ordinary courier. So great was the confidence which the apparent tranquillity of the government inspired, that neither cipher, nor any of the usual precautions, were employed to conceal their contents, or the names of the persons interested.

While, therefore, Alberoni anxiously expected the arrival of this important messenger, he was confounded with the intelligence that the design was discovered. Don Vincente was arrested at Poitiers, his papers seized, and by the information which they contained, a clue was found to trace the agents and outline of the conspiracy. Cellamar received notice of the incident sufficiently early to destroy the most dangerous documents; but his person was put under arrest, and his papers examined. At the same time many of the chief conspirators were seized, particularly the duke and duchess of Maine, their sons the count of Eu and the prince of Dombes, cardinal Polignac, the duke of Richelieu, the marquis of Pompadour, and many persons of all

\* Intercepted letter from Alberoni to Cellamar. Hist. Reg.

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ranks and orders, from whose papers and confessions additional information was drawn. These documents being submitted to the examination of a private council, the regent justified his conduct by publishing an account of the conspiracy, addressed in a circular letter to all the foreign ministers resident at the court, and accompanied with all the requisite proofs.\*

The draughts of the intended letter to the king, and the addresses to the parliament of Paris, were likewise made public. These contained strong professions of attachment to the memory of Louis the fourteenth, bitter invectives against the person, government, and political connections of the regent, and a request for the convocation of the states general, the organ of the national voice, as the only proper expedient to deliver the king and his people from oppression ; for the remedy of past and the prevention of future evils. But in the proposed manifesto to the states, these accusations are more forcibly and amply urged. It contains laboured complaints against the cruelty and

\* For the account of this mysterious conspiracy have been consulted and compared, *Memoires de St. Philippe*, t. 3, p. 333—336. — *St. Simon*, t. 7, p. 137. — *Richelieu*, t. 3, ch. 10. — *Memoires de Mad. de Staal*, ou *Anecdotes de la Regence*, t. 2, and 3. The authoress, then Mlle. de Launay, was maid of honour to the duchess of Maine, and one of her agents, and has given the most authentic narrative of the part taken by her mistress.

injustice of the quadruple alliance, and the unwarrantable conduct of the duke of Orleans, "*the mere depositary of the royal authority,*" in daring to league with the natural enemies of the House of Bourbon, without consulting the nation or parliaments; without even referring to the mature deliberation of the council of regency.

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The same general topics form the subject of all the papers; but in the memorial intended to be dictated to the states, the real views of Philip are more clearly developed.

"Sire, all the orders of the states throw themselves at your feet, and implore your assistance, in that situation to which the present government has reduced them. Your majesty is not ignorant of our misfortunes, though unacquainted with their extent. Our respect for the royal authority in whatever hands, and however exercised, leaves us no resource but in your support.

"This crown is the patrimony of your ancestors. He who now wears it, is bound to you by the strongest ties; the nation looks up to you as *the presumptive heir*, and hopes to find you animated by the same sentiments as your late grandfather, whose death we daily lament. With this view we lay before you our misfortunes, and implore your assistance."

After expatiating on the immoral conduct of

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the regent, his alliances with the enemies of the religion and of the monarchies of France and Spain, the want of public confidence, the disorders in the finances, and the countenance given to foreigners; after dwelling on the arbitrary and violent treatment of the parliaments, and the measures pursued against the natives of Brittany, the memorial proceeds:

“ If your majesty should demand what remedy can be applied, we answer, It is in your hands. Although you wear a foreign diadem, *you are still a son of France. As uncle to a minor king, who can deny your power to convoke the states, for the re-establishment of order, and the arrangement of the guardianship and regency?*

“ All France has perceived that in burying your own claims, you have consulted only the public tranquillity; and in this conduct all France acknowledges the heart of a true father of his country. Your majesty may be assured that if you *should appear with your household attendants only, all hearts would pant to meet you; and every citizen would be your guard. But if for greater security you enter the country with 10,000 men, and are opposed by the duke of Orleans with 60,000, you may be confident that the very troops on whom he may rely, will be the most zealous in obeying your*




*orders.* There is not a single officer, who does not lament, not a soldier, who does not feel, the perversity of the government ; not a subject, who does not regard you as his deliverer. All will vie in acknowledging and admiring you as the grandson of that beloved sovereign, who still reigns in our hearts. What have you to fear from the people or nobles, to whom you come to give security ? Your army is already in France, and you may expect to become as powerful here as Louis the fourteenth. At your discretion you will *be received either as administrator or regent, or as a prince who re-establishes with honour the testament of his august grandfather.*

“ Thus, Sire, you will see the revival of that union so necessary for the safety of the two crowns, which renders them both unshaken ; thus will you restore the tranquillity of a people who regard you as their father ; thus will you prevent misfortunes to which we dare not turn our eyes. What reproaches will you not cast on yourself if the event\* we so much dread should happen ! What tears will you not shed for having disregarded the instances of an imploring nation ! ”

On the discovery of the plot, the king of Spain openly avowed the measures adopted against the regent, and recurred to the hostile

\* The eventual death of Louis the fifteenth.

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preparations already commenced for supporting his pretensions. The french ambassador at Madrid had been previously arrested on a slight pretence, and ignominiously sent out of the country. Troops from all quarters were drawn towards the frontier.

Dec. 25.

Philip justified his conduct, in a manifesto containing the preceding topics of accusation ; and after describing his hostile preparations as directed solely against the person and authority of the regent, concluded with an appeal calculated to operate on the honour and loyalty of the french nation. With a view to excite public discontent, this manifesto was circulated at Paris, and through every part of France.

Jan. 9, 1719.

The discovery of the plot, and the insulting language of these papers, compelled the regent to declare war ; after he had resisted both the exhortations and examples of England and the emperor. The spanish manifesto was condemned by the parliament of Paris, as a treasonable publication. The declaration of war against Spain was accompanied with a manifesto detailing the causes of the rupture ; tracing the motives which had occasioned the conclusion of the quadruple alliance, and inveighing against the opposition of Spain to all endeavours for restoring the peace of Europe. As Philip had coupled his accusations against the regent, with professions of

regard towards the king, the regent in return spared the person of the monarch to direct the public indignation against Alberoni.

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To this the spanish court replied by a counter-declaration, justifying its refusal to assent to the proffered conditions of accommodation.

Feb. 29.

Among other arguments, it was urged ; “ The convention for the neutrality of Italy was null, because it had been repeatedly violated by the emperor ; the intended cession of Sicily to the duke of Savoy was equally null, because the duke did not observe the conditions annexed to it. The acceptance of the quadruple alliance was proposed by the united powers, who affected to give the law to Europe, in such an absolute and imperious style, as seemed to deprive kings of the sovereign rights derived from God.” Complaints were introduced against the ingratitude of England, after the advantageous terms of commerce obtained from Spain, and the perfidy of the british admiral, in attacking the spanish fleet without a declaration of war. To these were joined a vehement invective against the ambition of the House of Austria, and a new recapitulation of the hackneyed charges against the regent.

Notwithstanding the discovery of the conspiracy against the regent, the court of Spain was flattered by the general expression of the public sentiment in France ; particularly by the

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disposition manifested by all ranks in the army. Villars, the most distinguished general in the service, had not only refused to accept a command against a prince of the House of Bourbon, but had made an appeal to the regent and his council, deprecating a war, and recommending a reconciliation between two crowns so nearly connected by blood and interest.\* Besides the officers actually engaged in the conspiracy, large bodies in the army were actuated by similar sentiments, and the provinces bordering on Spain teemed with malcontents.

April 26.

Animated with new hopes by these appearances, which were exaggerated by the sanguine descriptions of his agents and partisans, Philip quitted Madrid at the commencement of spring, to head the army, which was to realize his design of resuming his birthright, and give the first impulse to that general revolution which he expected to effect, for the honour of the catholic religion and the interest of the House of Bourbon. He himself led the first division ; the queen accompanied the second ; the third was headed by Alberoni, who, like a Ximenes or a Richelieu, affected to blend the characters of the ecclesiastic and the warrior. It was not, however, on force alone, that Philip placed his reliance. He flattered himself that no french soldier would bear arms

\* Memoires de Villars, t. 2, p. 393.




against the first prince of the royal blood, and he was so sanguine in this expectation that he appointed the different regiments, in which those, who should abandon the standard of the regent, were to be enrolled. With the same expectation he published an appeal to the french soldiery.

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After expatiating on the reciprocal interests which ought to unite France and Spain, and reprobating the connection of the regent with England, as the means of disturbing this happy union, and reducing both nations to a disgraceful servitude, he exhorted the soldiery to repair to his standard, and aid his efforts to regenerate the nation. "If the french troops," he added, "will concur in this generous design, their young king, when he attains his majority, will acknowledge and gratefully reward the services of those who have co-operated for the security of his crown and life. By this necessary union, we shall respectively fulfil our duty. I that of my blood, and of the regency, which is *my right*; the french that of generous and brave subjects, who have raised themselves above vain apprehensions, disguised under the mask of obedience, forcibly extorted by the *pretended regent*." He concluded by promising to preserve the battalions which should pass over to his standard entire,

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with all their officers, and to distinguish them with those honours and rewards, which they were entitled to expect both from the importance of their service, and from his royal word. So confident indeed was he of the impression which his declaration would make on the army, that he formed the design of advancing with only a small escort into the french ranks, and appealing to the loyalty and affection of the soldiery. His romantic project was however frustrated by Alberoni, who, by a false order, contrived to delay the march of the intended escort.

These sanguine expectations terminated in utter disappointment. Although Villars had refused the command, a general scarcely less beloved and respected was found in the marshal Berwick; and the army, however secretly disposed, was awed by the restraints of his rigid discipline, and readily obeyed the impulse of his master hand. The obedience of the soldiery inspired respect for the government, and occasioned equal obedience in the provinces. After treating the declaration of Philip with the usual marks of public dishonour, the regent employed the name of the king in justifying his own measures; and, again holding forth Alberoni as the object of public indignation, announced his resolution never to conclude peace, while so

dangerous an enemy to the two countries was suffered to direct the spanish government.\*

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In the midst of this paper war hostilities actually commenced. The french opened the campaign with a superiority which frustrated the hopes of Philip, and disconcerted the plans of the minister. As early as March, Berwick, with an army exceeding 30,000 men, penetrated through the Pyrenees, advanced into Biscay, destroyed the arsenal at Port Passage, with six ships of the line on the stocks, and the magazines of naval stores, and, before the commencement of May, invested Fuenterrabia. The spanish force, which, after the detachments for garrisons, did not exceed 15,000 men, was concentrated at Pampeluna; but too weak to attempt its relief. Philip, indeed, was anxious to vindicate the honour of his crown and arms, by an attack on the besieging army; but he was overruled by the remonstrances and intreaties of the minister. "Hitherto," said Alberoni, "I have passed for the author of the war, and the disturber of the peace of Europe: I have drawn on myself the odium of the whole world, and it was a sacrifice to which I cheerfully submitted, and shall submit. But I cannot see your majesty, at the head of a

\* The different papers and documents adverted to in the text, may be found in Rousset, t. 1. Hist. Reg. and Political State for 1718—1719, and other collections of public papers.

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handful of men, attempt to succour Fuenterrabia, besieged by a more powerful army, advantageously posted. This is to encounter certain ruin; to expose yourself to a catastrophe the most terrible and unheard of. As I am blamed for every thing, it would give colour to the general accusation, that my mad schemes had no other end, and that no better result could have been expected from the counsels of a lunatic.”\*

June 18.

Philip, after employing all the resources which his situation afforded, to prolong the operations of the siege, had the mortification to witness the surrender of Fuenterrabia. St. Antonio was taken at the same time, by the assistance of an english squadron, the magazines destroyed, and the unfinished ships burnt on the stocks. St. Sebastian was next invested, and after a blockade of six weeks, reduced by a bombardment. To conclude the campaign in this quarter, the states of Biscay, Alava, and Guipuscoa were assembled, and offered to submit to the dominion of France on the condition of preserving their privileges; but to shew that the regent was not actuated by motives of aggrandisement or resentment against Philip, the proposal was declined.

As Pampeluna was too well fortified and garrisoned, to be attacked even in the presence of an inferior force, headed by a sovereign eager

\* Storia del Cardinale Alberoni, P. 2, p. 117.

to avenge his honour, Berwick withdrew into France, and directed his march north of the Pyrenees, to penetrate into Catalonia ; and Philip, leaving the army to follow his movements, returned mortified and indignant to Madrid. The french speedily took Urgel and invested Roses ; but the operations of the siege in so difficult a country were greatly obstructed by the weather, and the presence of the spanish army. In consequence of these obstacles, the french, after an arduous attack, abandoned the enterprise, and, relinquishing the design of establishing their quarters beyond the Pyrenees, retired into Roussillon.\*

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Aug. 31.

Unfavourable as this campaign had proved at home, in comparison with the brilliant hopes with which it had commenced, the events abroad were still more afflicting. Charles the twelfth, on whose desperate courage Alberoni had relied for the invasion of England, had fallen a sacrifice to his own rashness before a petty fortress of Norway. With him fell the hopes of co-operation on the part of Sweden and Russia. Ulrica, his sister and successor, was anxious to restore peace to the country, exhausted by a long series of wars ; and the appearance of a british

Nov. 30,  
1718.

\* Mem. de Berwick, t. 2, p. 196—322.—St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 353—402.—Ortiz, t. 7, p. 344.

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squadron in the Baltic was sufficient to reduce Russia to a neutrality.

Undaunted, however, by reverses, Alberoni was only more anxious to strike a blow, which might recal the forces of England for her own safety. He was encouraged by the declamations of the opposition, and their partisans, who re-echoed the language of the spanish manifestos, on the impolicy of a war with a natural ally of England, and inveighed against the attack of the fleet by admiral Byng, as a breach of public law, and a dishonour to the good faith of the nation. Mistaking these clamours for the public voice, the spanish minister imagined that the first appearance of foreign support would be the signal for a new revolution, which would restore the exiled family to the throne. He, therefore, prepared at Cadiz a squadron of six ships of the line, with a force of 6,000 men, and arms for 30,000 more, under the pretence of reinforcing the army in Sicily. When the arrangements were complete, the Pretender was invited from Rome to give countenance to the design, and take advantage of events; and the expedition departed under the command of the exiled duke of Ormond, to effect a landing on the coasts of Scotland.

March 10,  
1719.

But the same fatality as in other instances

attended an enterprize, which may be considered as the forlorn hope of the great, though unfortunate minister. The armament was dispersed off Cape Finisterre, by a storm of unusual violence. Of the whole fleet, only two frigates reached Kintail, their place of destination, having on board the earls Marshal and Seaforth, the marquis of Tullibardine, some field officers, 300 men, and 2,000 stand of arms. If Alberoni had miscalculated on the effects of the public sentiment in France, where a numerous faction really existed, anxious for a change of government, he was still more woefully deceived in trusting to the struggle of contending factions in England, and giving ear to the representations of Monteleon, that whigs and tories, as well as jacobites, would unanimously concur in transferring the throne to their exiled prince, and liberating their country from what was termed the irksome yoke of a german government. In supporting the cause of the Pretender, he touched the nerve, which vibrated through every member of the body politic. Contending parties forgot their mutual animosities to rally round the throne; while the jacobites, humbled by their recent discomfiture, were still further discouraged by the general burst of loyalty and attachment to the reigning family.

Favoured by these circumstances, the british

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government found little difficulty in baffling the meditated attack. Two thousand men were landed from Holland; 3,000 imperialists from the Netherlands; a strong fleet was detached to guard the scottish coast; an army rapidly assembled in the northern counties. The parliament zealously supported the king, and the regent offered an additional succour of 10,000 men. But the rebellion, if it may be so termed, was already crushed. A party of scarcely 2,000 highlanders, who had taken arms on the first appearance of a hostile force, were attacked by the royal troops stationed at Inverness, and driven to their mountains. The spaniards surrendered, and the rebel chiefs retired to the western isles, from whence they escaped to the continent.\*

For this aggression, the british government retaliated by an attack on the coasts of Spain. The squadron which had co-operated with the french army in Biscay, took Vigo, with its citadel, and Ponte Vedra, wasted the neighbouring country, destroyed the ships, docks, and arsenals; and then, stretching along the shore of Galicia, committed similar ravages at Rivadao. Naval armaments of considerable strength were also fitted out in the british ports, to carry the

\* Tindal, v. 19, p. 234—253.—Periodical Publications, particularly Historical Register, and Political State.—St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 358.



war into the american colonies, which were almost destitute of the means of resistance.

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Still, however, bearing up against disappointment, Alberoni made vigorous exertions to collect and refit the armament scattered off Cape Finisterre, for an expedition to the coast of Brittany, which was to distract the efforts of the regent. But in this project, he was not more fortunate than in the intended descent on the coast of Scotland. Timidity or disaffection among the chiefs delayed its departure, and before it appeared off the french shore, an army of 20,000 men was collected by the government, which overawed the malcontents, and baffled all hopes of raising commotions.\*

In Sicily also the spaniards experienced the most mortifying reverses. Exulting in their signal success at the commencement of the campaign, they flattered themselves that the occupation of Messina and Palermo would be followed by the fall of Syracuse, Trapani, and Melazzo, the only fortresses still held by the enemy. But circumstances soon altered, with the change which took place in the political system of Europe. Victor Amadeus at length acceded to the quadruple alliance, and in acknowledging the emperor as king of Sicily, ordered the governors of the places, still occupied by his troops, to

Nov. 10,  
1718.

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 364.

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receive austrian garrisons. The emperor also, released from the turkish war by the peace of Passarowitz, and the subsequent reduction of the hungarian malcontents, was enabled to detach an army into Italy, and under the protection of the british squadron, poured continual reinforcements into Sicily. On the other hand, the spanish government, exhausted by unsuccessful struggles and unexpected reverses, vainly endeavoured to keep up the army by succours and supplies in single ships, or light vessels, from the coasts and islands in the Mediterranean. The troops, hourly struggling with increasing disadvantages, maintained the hopeless contest with a firmness worthy of the national character; and several battles were fought, in which both parties displayed equal courage and skill. But every contest, and every victory, was fatal to an army which could not repair its losses; while, on the other hand, continual succours from the neighbouring shore, turned even defeat into an advantage. Accordingly, notwithstanding the affection of the people, and the most obstinate defence, the spaniards were gradually driven from the open country, and at length blockaded in the fortified posts.\*

An unsuccessful negotiation aggravated the embarrassments derived from unfortunate enter-

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 329—416—Ortiz, lib. 23, c. 7.

prises. Hitherto the dutch had deferred acceding to the quadruple alliance, under various pretences, and their neutrality had been rewarded with an advantageous trade to Spain and the colonies, carried on under the connivance of the court. The attractions of this lucrative traffic had outweighed the pressing instances of France and England, and had been repaid by an indulgence equally favourable to the views of the spanish minister. In the rich magazines of the republic, he found an inexhaustible supply of naval and military stores and provisions; the port of Amsterdam, as well as those of Zealand, were daily crowded with vessels of all distinctions, laden with these valuable requisites for Spain and Sicily.

At length, the reverses of the spanish arms, and the sinking credit of Alberoni, diminished the number of his partisans in Holland; the interest of England and France gained the ascendancy; though, to acquire a merit with Spain, the dutch government made the most pressing instances for the accommodation of the dispute. Alberoni adroitly profited by the overture to maintain a clandestine intercourse with the states, and offered to accept their mediation. With this view, he dispatched the marquis Scotti, agent of the duke of Parma, with instructions to Beretti Landi at the Hague, ordering him to take Paris

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in his way, and make a formal communication of the proposal to the regent.

This attempt to gain time, and to make the states the arbiters of the negotiation, wounded the pride of the french court. Without rejecting the overture, the regent demurred under the pretence of consulting the emperor and the king of England, and Scotti was detained at Paris, to become the instrument of a counter attack against his employer.

Meanwhile the spanish party daily declined in the states general. After a short demur on the part of Zealand and Utrecht, Holland acceded to the quadruple alliance; the example was speedily followed by the other provinces, though the accession was still clogged with the reserve, that Spain should be allowed a further term of three months to accept the proffered conditions. Alberoni was now compelled to bend to circumstances. He transmitted to the states a plan for the basis of the pacification. The conditions were, the cession of Gibraltar and Minorca by England; the restoration of the conquests recently made by France; the reversion of Tuscany and Parma for Don Carlos, as an hereditary succession, independent of the empire; the transfer of Sicily to the House of Austria, with the right of reversion to Spain; the restoration of Castro and Ronciglione,

wrested from the family of Farnese by the popes, and the regulation of the spanish and west indian commerce, according to the terms of the treaty of Utrecht. A minister was at the same time dispatched with a corresponding proposal to the court of England.\* But it was too late to avert by negotiation the danger to which force had been opposed in vain.

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\* Tindal, v. 19, p. 313.

## CHAPTER THE THIRTIETH.

1719—1720.

*Decline of Alberoni's credit.—Cabals and machinations to obtain his disgrace—Interference of the english and french cabinets—He loses the favour of the queen—His dismissal and departure from Spain—Incidents of his journey to the genoese territories—Arrest and liberation—Persecutions against him—His apologies, and the replies—Evasion—Re-appearance and subsequent adventures—Spirit of his administration, and improvements in Spain—His person and character—Close of his life.*

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**PHILIP** deeply regretted the disappointment of his lofty hopes, and the dishonour of his arms. During the campaign, he frequently testified his dissatisfaction with the minister ; but his displeasure was more particularly excited by the opposition of Alberoni to his romantic design of risking his person and army to save Fuenterrabia. His indignation, however, was checked or soothed by the queen, and there was no reason to doubt that her support, with a change of fortune, or even the mere lapse of time, would have enabled this great minister to maintain his original ascendancy. It is no wonder then that the dif-




ferent powers united against Spain, profited by these reverses to accelerate the fall of a man, whose talents and resources experience had taught them to dread. On the first symptom of his declining credit, the british court made instances to obtain the assistance of the regent, in terms which shew the high importance attached to the disgrace of Alberoni.

Aug. 22,  
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“ We shall act wrong,” writes lord Stanhope to cardinal du Bois, “ if we do not consolidate the peace by the removal of the minister, who has kindled the war. And as he will never consent to peace till he finds his ruin inevitable; if he continues the war, we must make his disgrace an absolute condition of the peace. For as his unbounded ambition has been the sole cause of the war, which he undertook in defiance of the most solemn engagements, and in breach of the most solemn promises, if he is compelled to accept peace, he will only yield to necessity, with the resolution to seize the first opportunity of vengeance. It is not to be imagined that he will ever lose sight of his vast designs, or lay aside the intention of again bringing them forward, whenever the recovery of his strength, and the remissness of the allied powers, may flatter him with the hopes of better success: He is versed in all the negotiations, and in procuring all the connections, necessary for the accom-

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plishment of his schemes ; he will be careful to cultivate those connections, and in due time, he will employ them so much the more dangerously for your nation and ours, inasmuch as his past imprudencies will render him more circumspect, and his past ill success more ardent. He himself has warned us against the dangers of a deceitful peace ; he is incapable of consenting to any other ; he thinks it no reproach to do every thing he is capable of performing ; and we ought to thank God, that he did not more exactly calculate his power and his undertakings. When he is reduced, let us not suffer him to recover. Let us exact from Philip his dismissal from Spain. We cannot make any condition which will be more advantageous both for himself and people. Let us hold forth this example to Europe, as a means of intimidating every turbulent minister who breaks the most solemn treaties, and attacks the persons of princes in the most scandalous manner.

“ When cardinal Alberoni is once driven from Spain, the natives will never consent to his again coming into administration ; even their catholic majesties will have suffered too much from his pernicious counsels, ever to desire his return. In a word, any peace made by the cardinal will be only an armistice of uncertain duration ; nor can we depend upon any treaty, till we make it



with a spanish minister, whose system is directly opposite, as well in regard to France in particular, as to Europe in general."\*


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A plan was accordingly formed by the courts of England and France, to effect his downfall, the execution of which was left to the regent; because, to consummate skill in the arts of intrigue, he united the most effectual means for influencing the spanish court. He easily gained d'Aubenton, who was alienated from Alberoni, for endeavouring to supplant him by an italian adherent, father di Castro. The confessor accordingly indisposed Philip against the person and conduct of the minister. He depicted his plans as extravagant in themselves, and hostile to the interests of Spain, and expatiated on the disorder introduced into every department of the state, to keep the sovereign in dependence, and ignorant of the real situation of affairs. This attack was seconded by private representations from Platania and Caraccioli, two sicilian abbots of good family, high in the confidence of Philip; and finally, by memorials from Ripperda, who, after renouncing his religion and country to establish himself in Spain, had obtained too distinguished a portion of the royal favour, not

\* Lord Stanhope to cardinal du Bois, Hanover, Aug. 22, 1719. Hardwicke Papers.

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1719—1720. to the minister.\*



These united representations made a considerable impression on the mind of a sovereign peculiarly jealous of his authority. But the stroke which levelled the towering grandeur of Alberoni came from his protectress the queen. For the purpose of gaining this princess, lord Peterborough, under the pretext of a journey through Italy, opened a communication with the duke of Parma. It was not difficult to persuade a prince, whose situation exposed him to insult, who was alarmed by the progress of the imperialists, and had been mortified by the ostentation of his former subject. His agency was, therefore, employed to influence his niece, who still retained a warm affection towards her family and native country. The marquis of Scotti, Parmesan envoy, was accordingly sent back to Madrid, with ample instructions from his sovereign, the regent, and the king of England, and his zeal was quickened by the liberal present of fifty thousand crowns.†

But even the privileges of Scotti, as a confidential minister, would scarcely have sufficed to

\* Account of Ripperda, by the sicilian abbots. MSS. Walpole Papers.

† Sir Luke Schaub's dispatches.

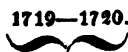
baffle the vigilance or avert the vengeance of his wily countryman, had not this complicated intrigue been favoured by an agent of more importance than celebrity ; Laura Pescatori, originally the nurse of the queen, and now her *assa feta*, or first woman of the bed chamber, who, from the influence of early habits possessed a great share in the affection, if not the confidence, of her royal mistress. This woman, a native of the same parish as Alberoni, and of parentage no less obscure, was imbued with that vanity which is frequently the companion of vulgar minds in sudden elevation. Her upstart pride was wounded by the state affected by her equally ignoble countryman ; and she avenged herself by singing and repeating to her royal mistress the numerous pasquinades which the fertile and satirical genius of the spaniards daily produced against his administration. She thus unconsciously prepared the way for a more serious attack ; and the power of ridicule had already associated the person and character of the minister with ideas of contempt, long before his abilities and services had ceased to inspire the respect which they deserved.\*

By the intervention of Donna Laura, Scotti obtained a private interview with the queen, in which he developed the mischiefs resulting from

\* Duclos, t. 2, p. 61.

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the plans of Alberoni ; and, in the name of the english and french governments, assured her of a more certain and substantial aggrandisement for herself and her family, than she could expect from his most successful efforts, if she would contribute to his dismissal. However grateful for his services, and however sensible of his talents, she was too much discouraged by his ill success to resist the temptation, and joined her decisive voice to the cabals already directed against the falling minister.

Dec. 4.

The attack was conducted with perfect secrecy, and Alberoni experienced no apparent diminution of the royal favour ; for, on the evening, the last of his political life, he transacted business with the king, and held a long conference with Scotti. But on the following morning, the king departed to the Pardo, and, as if to give greater publicity to his disgrace, instead of the usual letter of dismissal, left a royal decree, to be transmitted to him by the marquis of Tolosa, one of the secretaries of state, announcing his removal from all political power, and enjoining him to quit Madrid in eight days, and the spanish dominions in three weeks.\*

Thunderstruck with the order, Alberoni demanded in vain an audience of the king, and at last was permitted to write. But the letter, if

\* St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 429.

it ever reached its destination, produced no mitigation of his fate, for he was abruptly commanded to obey. He therefore employed the short interval of his stay in preparing for his departure, and rendering an account of his administration.

Before he withdrew from the political scene, he experienced a revulsion of the public sentiment, which has seldom occurred in the history of disgraced ministers. Detested as a foreigner and an upstart, and loaded with popular execration, while in power, the moment of disgrace became the signal of a triumph as flattering as it was unexpected. A chivalrous and high-spirited nation overlooked his errors, his faults, and his misfortunes, in the recollection of his superior talents and meritorious services: at his last levée, such a crowd of nobles, gentry, and clergy flocked to pay their final respects, and condole with him in his disgrace, as he had never witnessed even in the height of power. The king was alarmed and chagrined by this proof of public esteem, and ordered him to take his departure a day before the term originally prescribed.\*

\* On an incident of this kind, we should have paid little attention to the assertions of Alberoni and his partisans, had we not found the fact tacitly admitted by his answerer, who imputes it to curiosity and compassion, and even suffers the remark to escape him, that all the spaniards, then in Italy, spoke of the fallen minister with respect.—See his Apology, and the Answer, in *Ostoria del Card. Alberoni*, pt. 2; and a translation in *Hist. Reg.* 1722, p. 209, & 298.

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In obedience to the royal injunction, he departed on the 12th of December, taking the road to Barcelona, as the most direct and commodious for a passage into Italy. At Lerida, he was overtaken by a royal officer, who was deputed to search for papers \* missing from the secretary's office. Some of these documents were discovered among his baggage, and he himself tore to pieces a bill of exchange for 25,000 crowns in the officer's presence. He was permitted to continue his journey; but beyond Barcelona was attacked by a body of miquelets, who killed a servant and a soldier of his escort, and rifled his baggage, and he himself escaped with difficulty to Gerona on foot and in disguise. He traversed Languedoc and Provence, by permission of the french government, though closely watched, and attended by the chevalier de Massieu, who was commissioned by the


\* The papers which Alberoni carried away, were principally such as were necessary for his own justification. Some of these were recovered, but the most important, as he himself asserts in his Apology, escaped the vigilance of the royal officers, or had been already sent out of the country with his baggage by the way of Alicante. Some authors have even asserted, that one of the papers recovered, was the will of Charles the second, with which Alberoni hoped to purchase the favour of the emperor. But the assertion rests on no authentic proof. Even St. Philippe doubts the fact; the Answer to his Apology does not advert to it; nor do we perceive, in the situation of affairs at that period, what utility the emperor could have drawn from such a document.—St. Philippe, t. 3, p. 433.—Ortiz, t. 7, p. 347.—Duclos, t. 2, p. 62.

regent to gain his confidence, and obtain such disclosures as were expected to be drawn from him, in the agitated state of his mind. The wily statesman, however, suspecting the snare, amused the spy with pretended secrets of no importance. But he scorned to conceal his sentiments on his unmerited disgrace, and threw on his sovereigns the blame of prosecuting the war. He even accused the king and queen of the basest ingratitude, depicted the monarch as an uxorious bigot, who, after one moment saying in a low tone, "I will be obeyed," finishes the next with obeying; and the queen as possessed with an evil spirit, and as a fire-brand, who, for her interested views, would kindle the flames of war throughout the whole civilized world.\*

Embarking at Antibes, in a galley sent by the genoese government, he landed at Sestri di Levante, with the intention of proceeding to Rome. Here, however, he received a letter from cardinal Paolucci, papal secretary of state, forbidding him to enter the ecclesiastical territory, under pain of imprisonment, and soon

\* We find many errors in the details of Duclos and St. Simon, which are truly french, and particularly the offer which they attribute to Alberoni to disclose to the regent his connections with the disaffected in France. The imputation carries with it its own refutation, as totally contrary to the character and principles of Alberoni. It is doubted by St. Philippe, who is not prejudiced in favour of the ex-minister, and is supported by no specific authority.

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afterwards another, threatening him with the censures of the church, if he presumed to receive the inauguration of his see of Malaga. Unable to obtain an asylum in the territories of the republic, he passed in a felucca from Sestri to Spezzia, and taking the route towards the Appenines, in a few days was lost to his persecutors and to the world.

If the circumstances of his fall were honourable to the minister himself, they were degrading to his sovereigns. Philip and the queen had scarcely dismissed him, before they imputed the whole blame of the war to his turbulent spirit. With equal want of dignity and generosity, they lamented his ascendancy, loaded him with unmerited accusations, and meanly joined in the persecution of a minister, whose principal crime was the zeal and fidelity with which he had laboured to realise their vast designs. In the second audience which they granted to the british ambassador, they declared that Alberoni had invariably deceived them, and prostituted their royal names to others; that his impostures tended no less to the detriment of the public, than to that of individuals; that he employed a secretary who could imitate every hand; and had shewed them forged letters, for the purpose of ruining, in their opinion, and removing those whom he suspected; that his suspicions usually



fell on persons of character ; and, that there was no crime of which he was not capable, even of poisoning and assassination. For these reasons they intreated the king of England to employ his interest with the regent and the emperor, for the purpose of prevailing on the pope to deprive him of the purple, and retain him in perpetual confinement.\* These cruel accusations were the prelude to the most bitter persecutions. Spain even vied with the allied powers, in pursuing Alberoni with a virulence and vengeance of which recent periods have seldom shewn an example, in regard to a minister charged with no specific and heinous crime.

It is gratifying to contemplate the behaviour of extraordinary men in those trying situations which shake the firmest mind ; and fortunately, the general interest attached to the character and habits of Alberoni, enables us to indulge this curiosity. In the struggle of contending passions, which followed his disgrace, the exiled minister sought consolation in a work, which is calculated to inspire contempt for the delusive vanities of a transitory world. A copy of *Thomas a Kempis de Imitatione Christi*, is preserved in the ducal library at Parma, with marginal re-

\* Dispatch from sir Luke Schaub to earl Stanhope, Madrid, Feb. 17, 1720. Hardwicke Papers.

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marks in his own hand, recording the ordinary events of his journey, and other occurrences, which shew it to have been his daily companion.\*

The bitterness of adversity was, however, no sooner past, than the deep-rooted habits of the scholar and statesman again predominated. The anecdotes preserved of his late conversations, prove that, in the tranquil portion of his varied life, he again recurred to the cultivation of classic literature, and, over the pages of Tacitus and Livy, revived the memory of former greatness and past enterprises.

Alberoni has been too generally judged by the exaggerated axiom of a great and successful minister,† that misfortune is but another name for imprudence. While his friends have spared no endeavours to extenuate his faults, and blazon forth his merits, his enemies have represented him as a wild and sanguine projector, guided by no object, and impelled by no passion but an extravagant and restless ambition. Even historians have borrowed the prevailing tone of the times when he fell the victim of personal and political animosity; and the character of this truly great statesman has been transmitted to posterity in colours of unmerited obloquy.

Of his conduct in negotiation and war, let the reader judge from the authentic testimony of his

\* Poggiali.

† Richelieu.

rivals and contemporaries, collected in the preceding pages. That he was neither ignorant or neglectful of internal policy, nor ill-advised in his plans for its improvement, will appear from a brief review of the regulations which took their rise under his ministry, though his power was of too short a duration to give them consistency and effect.

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We pass over his measures for raising supplies at the commencement of the war, as mere temporary expedients to meet an emergency which he could neither delay nor avert. But still more provident for the future than solicitous for the present, he extended his views to a gradual and permanent amelioration in the whole system of the spanish monarchy. He rooted out a contraband trade of great extent, which was carried on under the privilege enjoyed by the people of Biscay of trafficking with the fabrics and productions of their own province free of duty. To lessen the introduction of foreign manufactures, which had hitherto filled the markets, to the detriment of those of Spain, he formed a new tariff of duties, abrogated many indulgences, and established superintendants in the different ports to prevent abuses. He abolished one of the last remnants of the antient division into separate kingdoms, by removing most of the inland custom-houses to the frontier; and re-

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storing to full liberty the interior communications and traffic. But private considerations appear to have prevented this change in the kingdom of Seville, where it was most wanted, as the great avenue of trade through Cadiz to the new world. At his suggestion, likewise, the municipal taxes in the kingdom of Valencia were abolished; the royal monopoly of strong liquors commuted for a duty on the inland consumption of fish, and a free scope given to the export of wines, which had hitherto languished from the expence of conveyance and want of a demand. New regulations were also established for one of the most profitable branches of the royal revenue, the tobacco trade from the Havannah. Arrangements were made to check the contraband traffic from the Canaries to America; finally a plan was formed to extend and improve the trade of the western shores of that continent by means of the Acapulco ship, without detriment to the fabrics of the mother country. It reflects no trifling honour on the firmness of the minister, to observe that many of these changes were introduced not merely in opposition to private interests and prejudices, but in some instances even to open rebellion.

In conjunction with measures calculated to create a demand, others were adopted to lay the foundation of future manufactures. Attempts

were made to introduce a fabric of crystals ; an office was set up for printing religious books hitherto drawn from Antwerp ; a manufactory of woollens was established under the royal patronage at Guadalaxara, and another of fine linens, imitating those of Holland. For these purposes, numerous dutch families were drawn into Spain, and the necessary tools and utensils procured from England. To give proper encouragement to these infant establishments, the strictest injunctions were transmitted to the different intendants and governors, to encourage the use of the native manufactures and produce, to restrain luxury in apparel, as the source of dependence on foreign nations, and to remove vagabonds and idlers. Lastly, as soon as the fabric at Guadalaxara had attained consistency, a royal decree was issued that all the troops should in future be clothed with the manufacture of Spain.

In conjunction with these arrangements, a plan was formed to ascertain the state, productions, and resources of the kingdom, as the foundation of further improvements : intelligent engineers were dispatched to survey the different provinces, with instructions which prove that no source of prosperity, however trifling, escaped the attention of the minister.

Looking to the immediate instruments of


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1719.

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national greatness, and the security of national prosperity, the naval and military were no less important than the economical plans of Alberoni. He formed the design of rendering Cadiz one of the noblest ports of Europe, prepared to improve that of Ferrol; and in these, as well as in others of inferior importance, established docks, arsenals, fabrics of rigging, and magazines. Within the short and troubled period of his administration, fourteen men of war were launched in the ports of the peninsula, an equal number was nearly completed; and the project was formed for constructing ships at the Havannah, which from the seasoning of the climate would be better adapted to the navigation of the american seas than those of Europe. To furnish a constant supply of intelligent and able officers, a seminary was founded at Cadiz, intended for the reception of no less than five hundred pupils, who were to be instructed in the theory and practice of navigation, and the appropriate branches of the abstruse sciences. He sought and encouraged officers of merit in every department both of the navy and army.

Lastly, he revived the foundry of artillery and the native fabrics of small arms, which had fallen almost into total inactivity; and he succeeded in emancipating the country from a dangerous dependence on foreign powers for supplying

the various articles of naval and military equipment.\*


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According to the description of contemporaries, Alberoni was of low stature, rather full than thin, plain in his features, and with a head too large in proportion to his height and size. But his look was peculiarly quick and piercing, and perfectly characteristic of his ardent and aspiring mind, though tempered with an expression of sweetness and dignity. His voice was flexible and melodious; and, when he endeavoured to conciliate or persuade, assumed a tone and accent, which gave irresistible force to his language. Though habituated to courts and camps; though accustomed to the intercourse of polished and lettered society; and though, on occasions which roused his lofty spirit, he assumed an air and tone of dignity becoming his high situation; yet he never wholly lost the original coarseness of his manner, derived from his mean birth and early connections.

In the endowments of his mind, nature appears to have lavished the gifts which she had withheld from his person. At once a scholar and a

\* The outline of these important plans has been traced from an examination and comparison of Uztariz's excellent Treatise on the Theory and Practice of commerce and maritime affairs, and Ulloa Restablecimiento de las Fabricas y Comercio Espanol, passim;—the different Apologies of Alberoni, and the respective Answers;—the Memoirs of St. Philippe and Ortiz, passim.

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man of the world, he had equally profited by study and experience. Besides his classical acquirements, he possessed a vast fund of information in almost every branch of human knowledge ; and his conversations and letters prove him scarcely less master of the french and spanish, than of his native language. With intense and indefatigable application, he united great strength of memory, quickness of comprehension, and grace of expression ; with a fertility of resource which extorts our admiration. He possessed the talent of insinuation in the highest degree, and a natural air of sincerity, frankness, and candour which seldom failed of persuading when he wished to persuade, and of deceiving when it was his interest to deceive. He was irritable and impetuous ; but he was so far master of passions highly dangerous to a negotiator, that in all his conversations which are exactly detailed by the french and english envoys, we never discover, amid the most vehement sallies, a single instance in which he was provoked to betray his purposes, or unveil his impenetrable secrecy, either by look or gesture. Temperate in his habits and mode of life, he made a boast which is uncontradicted by his adversaries, that, amidst the various avocations of his high station, he had strictly conformed to the decorum and duties of his ecclesiastical profession.



Though gentle to inferiors, he was pertina-  
cious and impatient of contradiction, proud and  
overbearing with his equals and superiors, and  
scarcely deigned to curb his haughty spirit even  
in the presence of his sovereigns. By the con-  
fession even of his friends, he possessed in a high  
degree that vindictive spirit which is attributed to  
his countrymen ; and in a still higher, that dissi-  
mulation with which they are equally charged.  
His ambition was lofty and unbounded ; but little  
scrupulous with regard to the means, provided  
he attained the end, he often debased the gran-  
deur of his designs by the manner of their  
execution. In a word, he was one of those  
gigantic characters which form a compound of  
extraordinary qualities and extraordinary defects ;  
born to rise in defiance of every obstacle ; to  
change the fate of nations, and alike distin-  
guished from the rest of mankind in success and  
adversity, power and disgrace.

The prejudices against Alberoni in England  
and France have been strong and lasting. In-  
deed, where public and private interests are so  
deeply involved, as in the examination of his  
ministry, it is scarcely possible for an individual  
to judge with impartiality ; in estimating there-  
fore the merits of a minister in Spain, it is  
necessary to assume the principles and prejudices  
of a spaniard. The indications of the public

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sentiment are too faint and transient in a country where the press labours under so many restrictions, to be traced with accuracy at this distance of time and place. Yet proofs are not wanting, that even when the degraded minister lay under the heaviest displeasure of the sovereign, numbers of all ranks and conditions concurred in acknowledging the services he had rendered to their country. Ortiz, the latest of their historians, has at length done public and ample justice to his memory, and does not hesitate to place him by the side of Richelieu and Mazarin.\*

Philip, affecting a repugnance to lay his hands on the sacred purple, permitted Alberoni to withdraw from Spain; but to render the pope the instrument of his vengeance, he transmitted articles of accusation against him, supported with formal proofs and documents; and exerted the whole influence of the spanish crown to obtain his arrest, trial, and condemnation. Accordingly, on his arrival in the genoesse territories, the pope, by his minister, cardinal Imperiali, obtained from the senate an order for his detention as a criminal against the holy catholic faith, and supported the charge by communicating the heads of accusation furnished by Spain. These were,

1. That he employed the money which he derived from the cruzadas and other ecclesiastical

taxes, in making war against catholic princes. 2. That he undertook a war against the emperor, at the moment when engaged in a contest with the turks, to the great detriment of Italy and Europe. 3. That for his own private interests he had prohibited the subjects of Spain from soliciting bulls for the benefices conferred by the pope.

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After due deliberation, the senate of Genoa declined taking cognizance of these articles, as civil, not ecclesiastical charges; and therefore nobly refused to gratify the interested resentment which actuated the pope, the king of Spain, and the allied powers. They accordingly restored him to liberty, but unwilling to give umbrage to the most powerful sovereigns of Europe, they commanded him to retire from their territories.

During the few days in which Alberoni remained in the territories of the republic, he published various letters and documents in reply to the charges preferred against him. He threw the odium of the war, as well as the breach of promise to the pope, on the king of Spain, and developed the intrigues and ambitious designs of the queen. The first of these is dated Sestri, February 11, in answer to the prohibition of the pope forbidding him to enter the ecclesiastical territory; the second, from the same place, March 20, encloses his celebrated Apology.

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The bold truths contained in these spirited writings, gave additional offence to the court of Madrid; and more urgent remonstrances were made for his degradation. But this new attack was repelled by the members of the sacred college themselves, who united in opposing a precedent which was dangerous to their whole body; though a commission of four cardinals was delegated to judge the charges against him.

When enjoined to quit the genoese territories, Alberoni appealed to his sovereign, the duke of Parma, for asylum in his native land, and, receiving no answer, appears to have made a final and more successful application to some of the swiss states. Accordingly, after remaining some days at Sestri, he sailed to Spezzia, directed his course across the Appenines towards the Modenese, and disappeared on the fourth day of his journey.† His route and place of retreat are uncertain, till we receive a hint of his residence at Lucarno, one of the italian baillages. Here he was protected by the government; for his

\* Storia del Card. Alberoni, pt. 2, p. 128—146.

† From the marginal memorandums written by Alberoni in his copy of Thomas à Kempis, in Poggiali.

biographer observes, that attempts having been made to seize his person, the regency of Coire transferred him to a pleasant castle in the recesses of the Alps, and issued the strictest orders to secure him from surprise.\*


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After remaining a year in this seclusion, the death of Clement the thirteenth opened to him more favourable prospects. On this occasion, the court of Madrid made a vigorous effort to exclude him from the conclave, on the plea that he still lay under an accusation not disproved. But the interests of the sacred college concurred in his favour, and, besides a safe conduct for his journey, the regular citation for his appearance was affixed in the cathedral of Genoa, and the church of Sestri, where he had last resided before his disappearance. By the zeal of a noble genoese, the abbot Vielato, timely information was conveyed to him ; and, quitting his retreat with the same mystery which had before baffled his persecutors, he emerged again into public notice at the house of a friend near Bologna. From hence he repaired to Rome, to assist at the election of a new pontiff.†

His reception in that city is thus described by a contemporary author. “ It is impossible to express the extreme impatience of the romans to

\* Storia, P. 2, p. 146. † Poggiali.—St. Philippe, t. 4, p. 70.

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behold the cardinal on his entry. But as the time of his arrival was not known, the natives, during six or eight following days, crowded to the gates, in order to obtain a sight of this extraordinary man. It would be no exaggeration to say, that, if we allow for the difference of the population, not a more numerous concourse of spectators attended the triumphal processions of the ancient emperors to the capital. There was scarcely a single person, from the highest to the lowest, who did not press forward to the gate. This prodigious concourse continued daily and hourly, till he made his appearance, and then it might have been supposed, that the romans had forgotten their own affairs, to pay attention to the cardinal, who, merely in passing through in his carriage, charmed the whole city by his address, affability, and condescension. The people were not content with having seen him once, twice, or thrice; for his carriage had no sooner traversed one street, than they rushed in crowds to another through which he was to pass. In this manner he was accompanied to his house with continued acclamations and applauses. In the conclave, he experienced a far different reception. Many of the cardinals at first opposed his admission, on the ground that he had not passed through the ceremonies considered as requisite to entitle him to a vote, and the

greater part refused to hold any communication with him.\*

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By degrees his insinuating manners and dignified conduct vanquished the prejudices against him, and he was permitted to take a share in the acts of the conclave. The new pope, Innocent the thirteenth, was prepossessed in his favour; but in compliance with the instances of Spain and France, he allowed the commission of cardinals to proceed in the trial of his cause.

Alberoni not only defended himself before his judges with great spirit and truth, but published an apology for his conduct, more bold and argumentative than his preceding compositions, under the assumed title of A Roman Nobleman in a Letter to his Friend.† This masterly composition made such an impression, that the spanish party found it necessary to publish a reply, in which, amidst the bitterest invectives, the force of truth occasionally displays itself. These different documents bring to light many particulars otherwise unknown, relative to his life and administration.

1721.

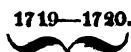
Such was the effect of his defence, that the commission terminated its proceedings by condemning him to retire into a convent for three years, and the pope shortened this term to one.

\* Voyage Historique de l'Italie, t. 2, p. 436.

† Storia, P. 2, and Appendix.

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At length, his bitter persecutor, the duke of Orleans, being dead, and the indignation of the king and queen of Spain subsiding, Innocent absolved him from all censures, and formally invested him with the purple. On the death of Innocent, he contributed to the elevation of Benedict the thirteenth; and in return, the new pontiff consecrated him bishop of Malaga, and gratified him with the usual pension granted to cardinals.

The adversaries of Alberoni have asserted that he accumulated great property in Spain, which he spent at Rome in magnificent living. The accusation is contradicted by the testimony of cardinal Polignac, french ambassador at Rome, who describes him as, not in distress, but far from the affluence which was invidiously imputed to him.

Polignac employed his interest to procure some compensation to the ex-minister, for the hostility he had experienced from the french government. He first obtained a present of 10,000 crowns, and afterwards a pension of 17,000 livres. He pays an honourable testimony to his disinterestedness and elevation of mind, and to his magnanimity in forgetting his past treatment from Spain, and in rejecting all overtures from the emperor. Polignac even laboured to restore him to the favour of his former master.



He endeavoured to procure for him the post of ambassador from Spain at Rome, vacant by the death of cardinal Aquaviva, and afterwards employed the intervention of marshal Tessé, then on a public mission to Madrid, to obtain the salary of 14,000 crowns, annexed to that post, as some compensation for the loss of his pension on the bishopric of Malaga. These representations were supported by the interest of the pope himself.\*

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Such urgent applications in favour of Alberoni seem to have excited the apprehensions of the british cabinet, who dreaded the restoration of a minister whom they had irreconcilably offended, and employed all their influence to thwart the interest making in his behalf.

“His majesty,” observes the duke of Newcastle to Horace Walpole, then minister at Paris, “commended your care in the hint you give relating to cardinal Alberoni, and would have you, if you find the least probability of his making any attempt that way, employ your best endeavours with the court of France to engage them to use their interest with Spain in disappointing his views, as well as those of cardinal Gualfieri. He would likewise have you send an account to Mr. Stanhope, that he may do all in his power to prevent his being employed by the

Jan. 25,  
1725.

\* Memoires du Cardinal Polignac, t. 2, p. 218, 468.

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court of Madrid. The duke of Parma was written to by the ministers here some time ago, on the report that Alberoni would be permitted to return to Spain. His highness answered in such terms as shew a perfect aversion on his part for the cardinal, and a persuasion that he is equally out of all manner of favour with the king of Spain, who has even rejected the present pope's repeated intercessions in Alberoni's behalf, that he might be permitted to resume his bishopric of Malaga, which he had been obliged to resign. However, too much precaution cannot be used in order to keep so dangerous a man out of any share of business, especially considering how odd an appearance it would have at this time."\*

These instances, and the prejudices already existing against Alberoni, frustrated all his hopes of obtaining the slightest proof of returning favour from the court of Madrid. On the formal application of the british minister, the queen petulantly replied, "I shall be far from consenting to the restoration of a minister who did not allow me sufficient to provide common necessities."†

In 1732, Alberoni was graciously received by

\* Duke of Newcastle to H. Walpole, Jan. 25, 1724-5. Walpole Papers.


† Mr. Keene's dispatch.—This remark is itself an eulogium on the firm and economical spirit of the minister.

the infant Don Carlos, who had just taken possession of the duchies of Parma and Placentia, and was permitted to establish himself in his native city, where he founded and endowed a seminary, at a considerable expence.

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During the campaign of 1746 in Italy, his seminary was occupied by the german troops, to favour their attacks on Placentia. He took refuge in the city, and his situation is thus described by a french officer, then in the combined bourbon army, who saw and conversed with him. “ He inhabited a single apartment, of which the whole furniturè consisted of a bed, a table, and four chairs. Not being able to procure wood, he had cut down an apricot tree, growing in the court yard of the house in which he lived, kindled a fire, and was cooking his scanty dinner with his own hands. He was then eighty, and extremely hearty for his age. His manner was easy and lively. He chiefly engrossed the whole conversation ; talked with all the garrulity of old age, and with a spirit rendered more interesting by his communications. He spoke promiscuously the french, italian, or spanish languages, according to the transactions or persons forming the subject of his discourse. He expressed himself in these three languages with equal energy, and supported his reflections by occasional quota-

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tions from Tacitus, in the original tongue. The campaigns of Vendome, his own administration in Spain, the affairs of Europe at that period, were the favourite subjects of his conversation; and he was particularly fond of explaining his plan for the establishment of the Pretender on the throne of Great Britain. The spanish troops, who defended Placentia, treated cardinal Alberoni with the profoundest veneration. They recollected, with transport, how much Spain owed to his administration, an administration distinguished for the jealousy which united the principal powers of Europe against a man rendered formidable by the strength of his genius, the extent of his schemes, and the depth of his views.”\*

Under the pontificate of Benedict the fourteenth, Alberoni was appointed vice legate of Romagna, and again signalised his restless spirit and fondness for intrigue by attempting to reduce under the see of Rome the petty republic of San Marino. But it was the fate of this singular man to be unfortunate in small as well as in great enterprises. He failed at the moment when he appeared secure of success, in consequence of a sudden burst of the popular enthusiasm for liberty, awakened by the bare word in the office

\* Grosely Observations sur l'Italie, t. 1, p. 183.